

THE SOLA SCRIPTURA PRINCIPLE DOES THE BIBLE TEACH IT?

Sola Scriptura can be defined as the Protestant principle that scripture alone is a sufficient teacher to gain salvation, and it, scripture, is the one ruler or standard by which any doctrine of the church should be judged. If a doctrine cannot be found within the covers of the 66 books of the Protestant Bible, then it can be safely rejected, your salvation does not depend on it. Some Catholic apologists will claim that this Sola Scriptura doctrine did not surface until the reformation of the 16th century and Martin Luther. Note the following:

This Mediator [Jesus Christ], having spoken what He judged sufficient first by the prophets, then by His own lips, and afterwards by the apostles, has besides produced the Scripture which is called canonical, which has paramount authority, and to which we yield assent in all matters of which we ought not to be ignorant, and yet cannot know of ourselves.

So just who authored this affirmation of the principle of the sufficiency and paramount authority of the scriptures known as Sola Scriptura? Was it Martin Luther? Perhaps another Johnny-come-lately disgruntled 16th century reformer? No, the author is from the 5th century, 1100 years prior to the Reformation! The author is none other than St. Augustine, quoted from his [City of God, book XI, Chapter 3](#), online at the Christian Classics Ethereal Library server, at Wheaton College.

Here is the same passage with a slightly different translation:

This mediator [Jesus Christ], first through the Prophets, then by his own lips, afterwards through the Apostles, revealed whatever he considered necessary. He also inspired Scripture, which is regarded as canonical and of supreme authority and to which we give credence concerning all those truths we ought to know and yet, of ourselves, are unable to learn.

So scripture, according to St. Augustine, is *the supreme authority and reveals all truths we should know*. That sounds about as good as any Protestant definition of Sola Scriptura. This version bears the Imprimatur, Nihil Obstat, and Imprimi Potest of the Catholic Church and is found in *City of God* published in 1958 by Image Books, Doubleday, Copyright 1958 by Fathers of the Church, Inc., edited by Vernon J. Bourke, ISBN 0-385-02910-1, page 207.

For among the things that are plainly laid down in Scripture are to be found all matters that concern faith and the manner of life ...

Source: St. Augustine, [● *On Christian Doctrine*](#), book II, Chap. 9, online at the University of Pennsylvania.

Could Augustine be more clear about the sufficiency of Scripture in matters of Christian faith? Here are more quotes of Augustine on the authority of scripture (emphasis is mine):

Chapter1, #3 ... **I have learned to yield this respect and honour only to the canonical books of Scripture:** of these alone do I most firmly believe that the authors were completely free from error.

Chapter 3, #24 ... as I have said already, **it is to the canonical Scriptures alone that I am bound to yield such implicit subjection** as to follow their teaching, without admitting the slightest suspicion that in them any mistake or any statement intended to mislead could find a place.

Source: [● *Letter 82 From Augustine to Jerome*](#).

2. Whereas, therefore, in every question, which relates to life and conduct, not only teaching, but exhortation also is necessary; in order that by teaching we may know what is to be done, and by exhortation may be incited not to think it irksome to do what we already know is to be done; what more can I teach you, than what we read in the Apostle? For **holy Scripture setteth a rule to our teaching**, that we dare not "be wise more than it behoveth to be wise;" but be wise, as himself saith, "unto soberness, according as unto each God hath allotted the measure of faith." (Rom 12:3) Be it not therefore for me to teach you any other thing, save to expound to you the words of the Teacher, and to treat of them as the Lord shall have given to me.

Source: St. Augustine, [● *De Bono Viduitatis*](#) (On the Good of Widowhood), online at the Christian Classics Ethereal Library server, at Wheaton College.

Here is another remarkable testimony from an early church father (emphasis is mine):

1. Introduction:--The purpose of the book a vindication of Christian doctrine, and especially of the Cross, against the scoffing objection of Gentiles. The effects of this doctrine its main vindication.

1. **The knowledge of our religion and of the truth of things is independently manifest rather than in need of human teachers**, for almost day by day it asserts itself by facts, and manifests itself brighter than the sun by the doctrine of Christ. 2. Still, as you nevertheless desire to hear about it, Macarius, come let us as we may be able set forth a few points of the faith of Christ: able though you are to find it out from the divine oracles, but yet generously desiring to hear from others as well. 3. For although **the sacred and inspired Scriptures are sufficient to declare the truth**,—while there are other works of our blessed teachers compiled for this purpose, if he meet with which a man will gain some knowledge of the interpretation of the Scriptures, and be able to learn what he wishes to know,—still, as we have not at present in our hands the compositions of our teachers, we must communicate in writing to you what we learned from them,—the faith, namely, of Christ the Saviour; lest any should hold cheap the doctrine taught among us, or think faith in Christ unreasonable.

Source: [Contra Gentes](#) (Against the Heathen.), by [St. Athanasius](#), Bishop of Alexandria; and [Doctor of the Church](#); about 318 A.D.

Here, another church father declares that the plan of salvation as taught in scripture to be the ground and pillar of our faith:

1. We have learned from none others the plan of our salvation, than from those through whom the Gospel has come down to us, which they did at one time proclaim in public, and, at a later period, by the will of God, handed down to us in the Scriptures, to be the ground and pillar of our faith. For it is unlawful to assert that they preached before they possessed "perfect knowledge," as some do even venture to say, boasting themselves as improvers of the apostles. For, after our Lord rose from the dead, [the apostles] were invested with power from on high when the Holy Spirit came down [upon them], were filled from all [His gifts], and had perfect knowledge: they departed to the ends of the earth, preaching the glad tidings of the good things [sent] from God to us, and proclaiming the peace of heaven to men, who indeed do all equally and individually possess the Gospel of God. Matthew also issued a written Gospel among the Hebrews in their own dialect, while Peter and Paul were preaching at Rome, and laying the foundations of the Church. After their departure, Mark, the disciple and interpreter of Peter, did also hand down to us in writing what had been preached by Peter. Luke also, the companion of Paul, recorded in a book the Gospel preached by him. Afterwards, John, the disciple of the Lord, who also had leaned upon His breast, did himself publish a Gospel during his residence at Ephesus in Asia.

2. These have all declared to us that there is one God, Creator of heaven and earth, announced by the law and the prophets; and one Christ the Son of God. If any one do not agree to these truths, he despises the companions of the Lord; nay more, he despises Christ Himself the Lord; yea, he despises the Father also, and stands self-condemned, resisting and opposing his own salvation, as is the case with all heretics.

Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* ([Book III, Chapter 1](#))

So the Protestant, and *even* St. Augustine, St. Athanasius, and St. Irenaeus, on occasion, proclaim the Bible to be the sole supreme ruler of faith, sufficient to declare the truth, the pillar and ground of truth with perfect knowledge.

The Catholic responds that the Catholic Church not only has the authority to preserve, define and interpret scripture, but in addition, has the authority to define and declare what it calls Tradition, which it claims is also the Word of God, and has the same validity as scripture:

Q. *Has tradition any connection with the rule of faith?*

A. Yes; because it is a part of God's revealed word, properly called the unwritten word as the scripture is called the written word.

Q. *What is Tradition?* [pg. 87]

A. The doctrines which the Apostles taught by word of mouth, and which have descended through every successive generation even to our times.

Q. *Are we obliged to believe what tradition teaches, equally with what is taught by Scripture?*

A. Yes; we are obliged to believe the one as firmly as the other; because, what the Apostles *preached* is as true as what they *wrote*: it was the same holy Spirit who spoke by their mouths and by their pen.

Source: [A Doctrinal Catechism](#), by Rev. Stephen Keenan, Imprimatur by John Cardinal McCloskey, Archbishop of New York, Copyright 1876 by T. W. Strong, pages 86, 87.

It is interesting to note that the Roman Catholic church does define and declare Tradition as a prerequisite to a saving faith. Examples of this type of Catholic Tradition would be:

The Immaculate Conception of Mary

Mary's preservation from sin, declared in the Apostolic Constitution Defining the Dogma of the Immaculate Conception, by Pope Pius IX, [INEFFABILIS DEUS](#), December 8, 1854:

Under the subtitle The Definition-

... "We declare, pronounce, and define that the doctrine which holds that the most Blessed Virgin Mary, in the first instance of her conception, by a singular grace and privilege granted by Almighty God, in view of the merits of Jesus Christ, the Savior of the human race, was preserved free from all stain of original sin, is the doctrine revealed by God and therefore to be believed firmly and constantly by all the faithful."

"Hence, if anyone shall dare-which God forbid!-to think otherwise than as has been defined by us, let him know and understand that he is condemned by his own judgment; that he has suffered shipwreck in the faith; that he has separated from the unity of the Church; and that; furthermore, by his own action he incurs the penalties established by law if he should dare to express in words or writing or by any other outward means the errors he thinks in his heart."

The Assumption of Mary

Mary's assumption into heaven, declared in the Apostolic Constitution of Pius XII, Defining the Dogma of the Assumption, [Munificentissimus Deus](#), November 1, 1950, paragraph 44:

... by the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, of the Blessed Apostles Peter and Paul, and by our own authority, we pronounce, declare, and define it to be a divinely revealed dogma: that the Immaculate Mother of God, the ever virgin Mary, having completed the course of her earthly life, was assumed body and soul into heavenly glory.

paragraph 45- Hence, if anyone, which God forbid, should dare willfully to deny or call into doubt that which we have defined, let him know that he has fallen away completely from the divine and Catholic faith.

As should be obvious, this distinction between Catholics and Protestants is no small matter, since Catholics claim that salvation depends on your belief in dogma that cannot be found in scripture, the only ruler of faith the Protestants know. What hope then does the Protestant have?

The Catholic will quote the following verse to "prove" their point. I am going to use several different Bibles for comparison, for those who might contest the validity of the King James.

From the **New American Bible for Catholics:**

2 Th 2:15 Therefore, brothers, stand firm and hold fast to the traditions that you were taught, either by an oral statement or by a letter of ours.

From the **Catholic Living Bible:**

2 The 2:15 With all these things in mind, dear brothers, stand firm and keep a strong grip on the truth that we taught you in our letters and during the time we were with you.

From the **1899 revised Douay Rheims:**

2 Th 2:14 Therefore, bretheren, stand fast; and hold the traditions which you have learned, whether by word or by our epistle.

From the **1611 King James:**

2 Th 2:15 Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.

From the **1602 Geneva New Testament:**

2 Th 2:15 Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and keep the instructions which ye have been taught, either by word, or by our epistle.

From the **1534 Tyndale New Testament:**

2 Th 2:15 Therefore brethren stand fast and keep the ordinances which ye have learned: whether it were by our preaching, or by epistle.

And there are these similar statements by Paul:

1 Cor 11:1-2 (KJV)

1 Be ye followers of me, even as I also *am* of Christ.

2 Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered *them* to you.

2 Tim 2:1-2 (KJV)

1 Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

2 And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.

The Catholic appeals to these passages to show that the apostles taught doctrine orally, without benefit of the written New Testament to back them up, so therefore, by their thinking, it is really no different when they teach Catholic Tradition that lacks any scriptural authority ([See this page for 2 Th 2:15](#)). But the early pre-New Testament church DID have a written authority to refer to and adhere to, as the following shows:

FIRST CITATION

From the **New American Bible for Catholics:**

Acts 17:10 The brothers immediately sent Paul and Silas to Beroea during the night. Upon arrival they went into the synagogue of the Jews.

Acts 17:11 These Jews were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with all willingness and examined the scriptures daily to determine whether these things were so.

From the **Catholic Living Bible:**

Acts 17:10 That night the Christians hurried Paul and Silas to Beroea, and, as usual, they went to the synagogue to preach.

Acts 17:11 But the people of Beroea were more open minded than those in Thessalonica, and gladly listened to the message. They searched the scriptures day by day to check up on Paul and Silas' statements to see if they were really so.

From the **1899 revised Douay Rheims:**

Acts 17:10 But the bretheren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea. when they were come thither, went into the synagogue of the Jews.

Acts 17:11 Now these were more noble than those in Thessalonica, who received the word with all eagerness, daily searching the scriptures, whether these things were so.

From the **King James:**

Acts 17:10 And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea: who coming thither went into the synagogue of the Jews.

Acts 17:11 These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.

Please note that the word noble derives from the Greek word eugenes, which Strong's defines as follows-

2104. eugenes, yoog-en'-ace; from G2095 and G1096; well born, i.e. (lit.) high in rank, or (fig.) generous:--more noble, nobleman.

This is significant because it clearly is commending the Bereans over and above the Thessalonians, because while they listened to Paul and Silas with an open mind, they still checked what they were told for accuracy by comparing it with the existing Old Testament scriptures. They did not just accept what they were told by anyone. They used scripture as their only ruler for truth. The principle of Sola Scriptura is very firmly and clearly established in this text.

Catholics however, object that the New Testament did not exist in its complete written form at the time of this incident, so by their reasoning, it is excluded from this appeal to scriptural authority. Just how, may I ask, does that change the principle established here? Scripture was consulted by the Bereans as the final arbiter of the truth, and this is the exact and precise definition of Sola Scriptura. Had Paul and Silas orally related Traditions (in the Catholic sense of the word) that were not in harmony with, or could not be found in the Old Testament, then the Bereans would have rightly rejected them!

The principle of Sola Scriptura is very clearly taught here and the Catholic should face the fact. Their only recourse is to counter that this situation has somehow changed at some point with the New Testament church and that Catholic Tradition must now also be considered in addition to the written word. Please note that this proof of a change would have to occur after the events in Berea, so this would automatically remove the four Gospels from consideration since they precede Paul's ministry in Berea. In any case, the point is the Bereans were following precisely the principle of Sola Scriptura and they were commended for it. That in itself shows Sola Scriptura is indeed taught and applied in the Bible, despite Catholic claims to the contrary.

It is also worth noting, that when Paul preached in Thessalonica and Berea, he reasoned with the people *out of the scriptures*. From the **King James**:

Acts 17:2 And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures,

Acts 17:3 Opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ.

Paul used the *written* word of God to prove that Jesus was indeed the prophesied Messiah the Jews were waiting for:

1 Cor 2:1-2 (KJV)

1 And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God.

2 For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

Rom 15:19 (KJV) Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.

Acts 20:27 (KJV) For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.

Paul in the New Testament never does teach or preach the Assumption of Mary, the Immaculate Conception of Mary, Mary Mediatrix of all grace, Advocate and Coredemptrix, and neither does he teach Papal Infallibility or Purgatory. Scripture demonstrates he taught and preached exactly what he claimed to teach, that Jesus of Nazareth fulfilled all the Messiah's requirements as set out in written scripture. Scripture was *the* guide by which anyone could judge for themselves if Jesus of Nazareth met the prophetic requirements completely.

So where do we see Paul teaching or preaching the sayings and Traditions of the Scribes, Pharisees, or Sadducees? Where does Paul, or any Apostle for that matter, cite the oral law, the Tradition of the elders, the Rabbis, as authoritative, as worthy as scripture for transmitting the Word of God? No where. Jesus, in fact, strongly condemned these oral Traditions (Mat. 15:2-9, Mark 7:3-13, Col. 2:8).

Because of the success Paul and Silas were having in converting Jew and Gentile alike to Christianity (vs. 4,12), unbelieving Jews caused an uproar that drove them out of both Thessalonica and Berea (vs. 5-10, 13-14). The unbelieving Jews apparently viewed these conversions as a threat to Judaism as they knew it. But without scripture to use for validating the Gospel of Jesus Christ as Messiah, Paul would not have been able to *prove* anything.

There is a rather striking parallel here that bears mentioning: that being the similarity of Paul's scripture-based ministry in Thessalonica and Berea, and the Sola Scriptura advocates or Protestant reformers. They also dared to preach directly from the scriptures, an act which has historically stirred the wrath of the Catholic Church, and has generally resulted in persecution down through the centuries, just like Paul stirred the wrath of the Jews in Thessalonica.

So can this principle of scriptural authority be found anywhere else in the bible? Indeed it can.

SECOND CITATION

From the **New American Bible for Catholics:**

2 Tim 3:15 And that from infancy you have known [the] sacred scriptures, which are capable of giving you wisdom for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

From the **Catholic Living Bible:**

2 Tim 3:15 You know how, when you were a small child, you were taught the holy Scriptures; and it is these that make you wise to accept God's salvation by trusting in Jesus Christ.

From the **1899 revised Douay Rheims:**

2 Tim 3:15 And because from thy infancy thou hast known the holy scriptures, which can instruct thee to salvation, by the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

From the **King James:**

2 Tim 3:15 And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

So according to Paul's second letter to Timothy, scripture is sufficient to make you wise unto salvation. This directly contradicts Catholic claims that Scripture is insufficient, and dogma defined in Tradition is also essential to salvation.

A Roman Catholic Cardinal Denies Bible Sufficiency To Salvation:

We must, therefore, conclude that the Scriptures alone cannot be a sufficient guide and rule of faith because they cannot, at any time, be within the reach of every inquirer; because they are not of themselves clear and intelligible even in matters of the highest importance, and because they do not contain all the truths necessary for salvation.

Source: *The Faith Of Our Fathers*, (The Church and the Bible), by James Cardinal Gibbons, Archbishop of Baltimore, 111th printing, copyright 1980 by TAN books and Publishers, Inc., ISBN: 0-89555-158-6, [page 73](#).

If Paul is to be believed in 2 Tim 3:15, what need is there then for the unbiblical doctrines and teachings of Catholic Tradition? Who shall we believe, the Apostle Paul, or Cardinal Gibbons?

THIRD CITATION

From the **New American Bible for Catholics:**

Isa 8:19 And when they say to you, "Inquire of mediums and fortune-tellers (who chirp and mutter); should not a people inquire of their gods, apply to the dead on behalf of the living!"- Isa 8:20 then this document will furnish its instruction. That kind of thing they will surely say.

From the **Catholic Living Bible:**

Isa 8:19 So why are you trying to find out the future by consulting witches and mediums? Don't listen to their whisperings and mutterings. Can the living find out the future from the dead? Why not ask your God?

Isa 8:20 "Check these witches' words against the Word of God!" he says if their messages are different than mine, it is because I have not sent them; for they have no light or truth in them.

From the **1899 revised Douay Rheims**:

Isa 8:19 And when they shall say to you: Seek of pythons, and of diviners, who mutter in their enchantments; should not the people seek of their God, for the living of the dead?

Isa 8:20 To the law rather, and to the testimony. And if they speak not according to this word, they shall not have the morning light.

From the **King James**:

Isa 8:19 And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead?

Isa 8:20 To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.

The words for *law* and *testimony* here mean the Word of God. The word *law* is *torah*, and *testimony* is *te'uwdah*. Torah may mean either the Decalogue or the Pentateuch, and same can be true of te'uwdah. Isaiah uses both words together previously in chapter 8-

From the **King James**:

Isa 8:16 Bind up the testimony (te'uwdah), seal the law (torah) among my disciples.

From the **New American Bible for Catholics**:

Isa 8:16 The record is to be folded and the sealed instruction kept among my disciples.

From the **Catholic Living Bible**:

Isa 8:16 Write down all these things I am going to do, says the Lord, and seal it up for the future. Entrust it to some godly man to pass on down to godly men of future generations.

From the **1899 revised Douay Rheims**:

Isa 8:16 Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples.

Clearly Isa 8:16 is speaking of the revealed Word of God written down and contained in the first five books of the Bible, the Torah, which includes the tablets of testimony, the Ten Commandments, but there is also a wider application evident from a number of references to the "law" and the "prophets" (2 Ki 17:13, Neh 9:26, Lam 2:9, Zeph 3:4, Zech 7:12, Matt 5:17, Matt 7:12, Matt 11:13, Matt 22:40, Luke 16:16, John 1:45, Acts 13:15, Acts 24:14, Acts 28:23, Rom 3:21), meaning Scripture as a whole. There is another phrase with identical meaning in the New Testament - "Moses and the prophets", found in Luke 16:29,31, Luke 24:27,44, John 1:45, Acts 26:22, and Acts 28:23.

Note this verse in Revelation that describes those whom Satan is angered with:

Rev 12:17 And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep **the commandments of God**, and have **the testimony of Jesus Christ**.

Revelation 12:17 is speaking about the "law and the testimony", and Revelation 19 further defines "testimony" for us:

Rev 19:10 And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for **the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy**.

Testimony is equated with prophecy, therefore Revelation 12:17 is actually talking about "*the law and the prophets*", the entire span of Scripture, which the people of God tenaciously adhere to in the end times, to the great anger of Satan.

So now return to Isaiah 8:20-

To the law [*Moses*] and to the testimony [*prophets*]: if they speak not according to this word [*scripture*], it is because there is no light in them.

This then is saying that anyone who does not speak according to the *entire* written Word of God, the Scriptures, "*the law and the prophets*", or "*Moses and the prophets*", if they are not in harmony with it, then there is no light in them. It again proclaims the authority of scripture and only scripture, to discern truth and light.

FOURTH CITATION

From the **New American Bible for Catholics**:

John 20:30 Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of [his] disciples that are not written in this book.

John 20:31 But these are written that you may [come to] believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through this belief you may have life in his name.

From the **Catholic Living Bible**:

John 20:30, 31 Jesus' disciples saw him do many other miracles besides the ones told about in this book, but these are recorded so that you will believe that he is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that believing in him you will have life.

From the **1899 revised Douay Rheims**:

John 21:30 Many other signs also did Jesus in the sight of his disciples, which are not written in this book.

John 21:31 But these are written, that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing, you may have life in his name.

From the **King James:**

John 20:30 And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book:

John 20:31 But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.

There is a similar passage in John that is a favorite of Catholics to quote in support of Tradition-

From the **New American Bible for Catholics:**

John 21:25 There are also many other things that Jesus did, but if these were to be described individually, I do not think the whole world would contain the books that would be written.

From the **Catholic Living Bible:**

John 21:25 And I suppose that if all the other events in Jesus' life were written, the whole world could hardly contain the books!

From the **1899 revised Douay Rheims:**

John 21:25 But there are also many other things which Jesus did; which, if they were written every one, the world itself, I think, would not be able to contain the books that should be written.

From the **King James:**

John 21:25 And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen.

John said in 20:30 that a sufficient number of the signs or miracles performed by Jesus ARE included in scripture to validate that He was indeed the Messiah, so that you will have a saving faith. Again, scripture includes whatever is necessary to bring you to a saving faith. Nothing that is necessary for salvation is left out. John 21:25 in no way changes that, nor can it be cited for proof of unwritten articles of faith (Tradition) required for salvation. It says essentially that not every *deed* or *action* of Jesus is recorded, (Just as John had stated earlier) but he again does not even hint at unrecorded doctrines.

From the **New American Bible for Catholics:**

Prov 30:5 Every word of God is tested; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him.

Prov 30:6 Add nothing to his words, lest he reprove you, and you be exposed as a deceiver.

From the **Catholic Living Bible:**

Prov 30:5 Every word of God proves true. He defends all who come to him for protection.

Prov 30:6 Do not add to his words, lest he rebuke you, and you be found a liar.

From the **1899 revised Douay Rheims:**

Prov 30:5 Every word of God is fire tried: he is a buckler to them that hope in him.

Prov 30:6 Add not any thing to his words, lest thou be reprov'd, and found a liar:

From the **King James:**

Prov 30:5 Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him.

Prov 30:6 Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.

There is a clear warning here to those who would try and amend the word of God through additions. Isn't this *exactly* what the ex-cathedra Roman Catholic doctrines of the Immaculate Conception and Assumption of Mary are?

So by what standard do you know what the word of God is? What authority should be consulted to assure yourself that you are not adding to His word? Just exactly what is the word of God?

SIXTH CITATION

From the **New American Bible for Catholics:**

John 10:35 If it calls them gods to whom the word of God came, scripture cannot be set aside,

From the **1899 revised Douay Rheims:**

John 10:35 If he called them gods, to whom the word of God was spoken, and the scriptures cannot be broken;

From the **King James:**

John 10:35 If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken;

In this verse Jesus is quoting Psalm 82:6. (In context, the word for "gods" actually means judges.) Here the word of God and scripture are linked as one and the same.

SEVENTH CITATION

From the **King James:**

Mat 7:24 Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:

Mat 7:25 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.

From the **New American Bible for Catholics:**

Mat 7:24 Everyone who listens to these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on a rock.

Mat 7:25 The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and buffeted the house. But it did not collapse; it had been set solidly on rock.

From the **1602 Geneva New Testament:**

Mat 7:24 Whosoever then heareth of me these words, and doeth the same, I will liken him to a wise man, which hath builded his house on a rock.

Mat 7:25 And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell not; for it was grounded upon a rock.

From the **1899 revised Douay Rheims:**

Mat 7:24 Every one therefore that heareth these my words, and doth them, shall be likened to a wise man that built his house upon a rock.

Mat 7:25 And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and they beat upon that house, and it fell not, for it was founded on a rock.

So, where can we turn to study and hear the words of Jesus, that we might do them and build our house on His solid rock foundation? Surely this truth is indeed found in scripture, the word of God.

EIGHTH CITATION

From the **King James:**

2 Tim 2:15 Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

From the **1899 revised Douay Rheims:**

2 Tim 2:15 Carefully study to present thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.

Clearly Paul is saying here to study the scriptures, which he defines as the word of truth. But then, what Catholic would deny that scripture is the word of God? None of course... but they would reply that the written word is not the sole word of God. Catholic Tradition they would say, as declared by the church, has equal authority, as shown by the new Vatican Catechism-

... two distinct modes of transmission

#81 "Sacred Scripture is the speech of God as it is put down in writing under the breath of the Holy Spirit." And [Holy] Tradition transmits in its entirety the Word of God which has been entrusted to the apostles by Christ the Lord and the Holy Spirit. It transmits it to the successors of the apostles so that, enlightened by the Spirit of truth, they may faithfully preserve, expound, and spread it abroad by their preaching.

#82 As a result the Church, to whom the transmission and interpretation of Revelation is entrusted, "does not derive her certainty about all revealed truths from the Holy Scriptures alone. Both Scripture and Tradition must be accepted and honored with equal sentiments of devotion and reverence."

But just where does scripture make this declaration?

NINTH CITATION

From the **1899 revised Douay Rheims:**

John 5:39 Search the scriptures, for you think in them to have life everlasting; and the same are they that give testimony of me.

John 5:40 And you will not come to me that you may have life.

John 5:46 For if you did believe Moses, you would perhaps believe me also; for he wrote of me.
John 5:47 But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe my words?

From the **King James:**

John 5:39 Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.

John 5:40 And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.

John 5:46 For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me.

John 5:47 But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?

Here Jesus tells the Jews to study and *search the scriptures*, because they know that the way to eternal life can indeed be found there. That way to eternal life is revealed in scripture as Jesus Christ, *the* Messiah that the Jews had longed for. But the Jews did not even believe what Moses had written, and as a result repeatedly fell into apostasy. Jesus makes the point that if the Jews will not believe and obey what Moses had *written* in scripture, then how could they possibly believe the words *spoken* directly to them by the Christ that the scriptures reveal? Had the Jews properly understood and believed the scriptures, they would have recognized Jesus for who He was, the very Son of God.

So this passage teaches that the *written* word of God is sufficient to reveal the way to eternal life, which is none other than Jesus Christ. It is as true today as it was the day it was written.

TENTH CITATION

From the **King James:**

Rom 16:24 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

Rom 16:25 Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began,

Rom 16:26 But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith:

From the **1899 revised Douay Rheims:**

Rom 16:24 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

Rom 16:25 Now to him that is able to establish you, according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret from eternity,

Rom 16:26 (Which now is made manifest by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the precept of the eternal God, for the obedience of faith,) known among all nations;

What is to be made known among all nations? The gospel, the mystery of God.
How is it revealed (made manifest)? By the scriptures of the prophets, according to the
commandment of the everlasting God.

ELEVENTH CITATION

Apollos also, like Paul, taught the Gospel from the scriptures, not from Tradition:

From the **1899 revised Douay Rheims**:

Acts 18:24 Now a certain Jew, named Apollo, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, came to Ephesus, one mighty in the scriptures.

Acts 18:25 This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in spirit, spoke, and taught diligently the things that are of Jesus, knowing only the baptism of John.

Acts 18:26 This man therefore began to speak boldly in the synagogue. Whom when Priscilla and Aquila had heard, they took him to them, and expounded to him the way of the Lord more diligently.

Acts 18:27 And whereas he was desirous to go to Achaia, the brethren exhorting, wrote to the disciples to receive him. Who, when he was come, helped them much who had believed.

Acts 18:28 For with much vigour he convinced the Jews openly, shewing by the scriptures, that Jesus is the Christ.

From the **King James**:

Acts 18:24 And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures, came to Ephesus.

Acts 18:25 This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John.

Acts 18:26 And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.

Acts 18:27 And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him: who, when he was come, helped them much which had believed through grace:

Acts 18:28 For he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly, showing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ.

TWELFTH CITATION

From the **King James:**

1 Cor 4:6 And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another.

From the **1899 revised Douay Rheims:**

1 Cor 4:6 But these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollo, for your sakes; that in us you may learn, that one be not puffed up against the other for another, above that which is written.

From the **1602 Geneva Bible's New Testament:**

1 Cor 4:6 Now these things, brethren, I have figuratively applied unto mine own self and Apollos, for your sakes, that ye might learn by us, that no man presume above that which is written, that one swell not against another for any mans cause.

From the **1534 Tyndale New Testament:**

1 Cor 4:6 Now these things, brethren, I have described in mine own person and Apollos, for your sakes, that ye might learn by us, that no man count of himself beyond that which is above written: that one swell not against another for any mans cause.

From the **Amplified Bible:**

1 Cor 4:6 Now I have applied all this [about parties and factions] to myself and Apollos for your sakes, bretheren, so that from what I have said of us [as illustrations] you may learn [to think of men in accordance with Scripture and] not to go beyond that which is written; that none of you may be puffed up *and* inflated with pride *and* boast in favor of one [minister and teacher] against another.

Paul in the opening chapters of 1 Corinthians is speaking against the factions that had developed in the Corinthian church. These factions were formed around various teachers, like Paul himself, Apollos and Peter (1 Cor 1:12, 3:4). Each faction exalted itself in pride because of who their favorite teacher was. Paul using himself as an example asks - "was Paul crucified for you? or were you baptized in the name of Paul?" (1 Cor 1:13). Paul is making the point here that it is the message of "Jesus Christ, and him crucified" that matters (1 Cor 2:2), but not who it was that brought you that message. Paul himself taught the basics, or "milk" of the Gospel (1 Cor 3:2), while Apollos built on what Paul had taught, at a higher level of understanding (1 Cor 3:6). In both cases though, it was God who gave understanding (1 Cor 3:7), not Paul or Apollos. So Paul says (1 Cor 3:21-22) "let no man glory in men. For all things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas (Peter)" The point he is making is that scripture does not teach one to be a disciple of Paul, or Apollos, or Peter, but rather a disciple of Jesus Christ, whom all the prophets and apostles preached about.

So when Paul says "not to go beyond that which is written," he makes quite clear that the *written* scriptures are the limiting factor. ***This is Sola Scriptura in verity.*** Paul is teaching unity in the truths of the Gospel message as found in scripture, which teaches Jesus Christ as the Saviour and foundation (1 Cor 3:11), but he is criticizing divisive factions in the church based on individual disciples. The warning is not to build teachings, doctrines, or dogma that go beyond the teaching of scriptures and exalt anyone other than Christ. The church that exalts one disciple over another, and so divides the body of Christ, is described by Paul as being *carnal* rather than spiritual (1 Cor 3:4). Does this not then describe a church that calls Peter the preeminent apostle, and presumes to trace itself all the way back to Peter via the Tradition of apostolic succession? This is *precisely* what Paul is warning against.

THIRTEENTH CITATION

From the **1899 revised Douay Rheims:**

Acts 20:26 Wherefore I take you to witness this day, that I am clear from the blood of all men;

Acts 20:27 For I have not spared to declare unto you all the counsel of God.

Acts 20:28 Take heed to yourselves, and to the whole flock, wherein the Holy Ghost hath placed you bishops, to rule the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

Acts 20:29 I know that, after my departure, ravening wolves will enter in among you, not sparing the flock.

Acts 20:30 And of your own selves shall arise men speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.

Acts 20:31 Therefore watch, keeping in memory, that for three years I ceased not, with tears to admonish every one of you night and day.

From the **King James:**

Acts 20:26 Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men.

Acts 20:27 For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.

Acts 20:28 Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

Acts 20:29 For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.

Acts 20:30 Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.

Acts 20:31 Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.

FOURTEENTH CITATION

From the **1899 revised Douay Rheims:**

2 Cor 11:3 But I fear lest, as the serpent seduced Eve by his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted, and fall from the simplicity that is in Christ.

2 Cor 11:4 For if he that cometh preacheth another Christ, whom we have not preached; or if you receive another Spirit, whom you have not received; or another gospel which you have not received; you might well bear with him.

From the **King James:**

2 Cor 11:3 But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

2 Cor 11:4 For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him.

So here, up to this point, are no less than fourteen different passages found in both the Old Testament and the New Testament that collectively establish the principle of Sola Scriptura, the authority of scripture alone to discern truth and instruct one in a saving faith in Jesus Christ. What then of Catholic Tradition? What of the dogmas of the apostolic succession, the immaculate conception of Mary, her assumption into heaven, her role as mediatrix of God's grace and the many other such unbiblical Catholic Traditions? What bearing do they really have on salvation?

FIFTEENTH CITATION

From the **1899 revised Douay Rheims:**

Gal 1:6 I wonder that you are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ, unto another gospel.

Gal 1:7 Which is not another, only there are some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.

Gal 1:8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach a gospel to you besides that which we have preached to you, let him be anathema.

From the **King James:**

Gal 1:6 I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel:

Gal 1:7 Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.

Gal 1:8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.

Gal 1:9 As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.

The gospel message as preached by Paul, and as recorded faithfully in the scriptures, is pure and remains sufficient to salvation. No doctrine or Tradition needs to be added to what Paul taught the early Christians. In fact, Paul condemns anyone who would teach a gospel other than what he had presented, which was the whole counsel of God.

Conclusion

Clearly Sola Scriptura stands as biblically taught truth. The decrees and pronouncements called "Tradition" by the Roman Catholic Church, which cannot be found in scripture, are therefore rightly defined as that "other gospel" that Paul spoke of.

So let those who teach that other gospel take solemn note of Paul's warning.

Sola Scriptura

Tradition



The above old woodcut illustrates the differences in teaching.

The Protestants on the left, are deep in Bible study during the sermon.

Catholics on the right, with their rosary beads and no Bibles, are reciting their "Hail Marys".

- [Paul's Gospel In Catholic Tradition?](#)
 - [Sola Scriptura and Bible Availability](#)
 - [Does Sola Scriptura Fail Because There Are Thousands of Protestant Denominations?](#)
 - [Sola Ecclesia Romanus](#)
 - [Did the Bereans reject Sola Scriptura? by James White.](#)
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Paul's Gospel In Catholic Tradition?

The following email was sent to Daniel at [A Biblical Case for the Catholic Faith](#) on April 8, 2007:

Gal 1:6 I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel:

Gal 1:7 Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.

Gal 1:8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed (anathema).

Gal 1:9 As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed (anathema).

That tells me to test what is taught by what Paul taught. Now, outside of scripture, where exactly does Catholic Apostolic Tradition quote the unwritten words of any of Paul's teaching?

Where does Paul teach that Mary was immaculately conceived?

Where does Paul teach that Mary was assumed into heaven?

Where does Paul teach prayer to Mary or other supposed saints?

Where does Paul teach Mary is the mediatrix of all grace?

Where does Paul teach the veneration of images?

Where does Paul teach Sunday keeping has replaced the Sabbath?

Can you show me any of these doctrines in Paul's word-for-word teaching that is found only in Catholic Apostolic Oral Tradition and not in the Bible? Yes or No? If no, then you would automatically agree that all of Paul's gospel can only be found in inspired scripture, and Paul's gospel in scripture is the ruler by which Catholic Tradition can be judged. Right? Would Paul accept those Catholic doctrines or curse them?

Your reply, if any, will be considered as an open letter with your permission that I may post it on

my web site, unless you specifically withhold your permission.

Michael

<http://biblelight.net>

The following reply (in the boxes) was received on April 13, 2007:

Dear Michael,

I would love to be on your website. Please send me the link so I can read what both of us wrote in their entirety. As for your questions above, they presuppose that the everything is in the Holy Scriptures or that the Scriptures are a final or sole rule of Faith as if this is some requirement written in the Holy Bible.

Paul is quite firm in his assertion that not even an angel from heaven can teach a gospel message that differs from the one he preached. I am simply asking you where in Roman Catholic Tradition is Paul's preaching of those particular doctrines to be found? The first two, the immaculate conception and the assumption of Mary are considered infallible papal decrees that all Catholics are bound to believe or they are shipwrecked and fallen completely away from the faith. In other words, they are infallibly declared a part of the Catholic gospel, as a Catholic who rejects those doctrines cannot be saved. Now where exactly does Paul teach this?

This idea is not only unbiblical it is also unworkable if one reads the verses supporting Catholic theology not underlined in their personal Bibles.

[Click here: A Biblical case for the Catholic Faith. 7 Reasons Christians go to church and what it means to be a Bible Believing Christian](#)

Paul's assertion in Galatians 1:6-9 is certainly biblical, and he said he did preach the *entire* gospel:

Rom 15:19 Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.

Acts 20:27 For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.

So if I want to read Paul's inspired gospel teaching, what *must* I read?

Many quote 2 Tim 3:16 as teaching the idea of Sola Scriptura or Bible Alone, yet fail to read 2 Tim 3:15 which tells us the Apostle Paul was speaking of the OLD Testament not the unwritten NT in his quote. So is the OT all we need? Then let's just shelf the NT. My friend, nowhere and I mean nowhere do the Holy Scriptures teach the SOLA in Sola Scriptura or the ONLY in Bible Only. This renaissance era

idea is unbiblical and unheard of in Apostolic Christianity. If I am wrong, please send me the verse teaching this "SOLA or ONLY." Or send me just one Christian in the first millennium who taught this idea, that one's personal interpretation of the Holy Bible can countermand the teachings of Christ's Church, the Church the Holy Bible calls: "**The church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of truth**" **1 Tim 3:15**. (Either it is the pillar and foundation of truth or it's not, which is it to you?)

See: [THE SOLA SCRIPTURA PRINCIPLE - DOES THE BIBLE TEACH IT?](#)
and [The Pillar and Ground of Truth of 1 Timothy 3:15 - Is it the Roman Catholic Church?](#)

As for your quote from Galatians, the Apostle speaks of Preaching the Gospel. There are so many doctrines / ideas embraced by **both** our traditions that are outside the Holy Bible.

This appears to be an admission that the Catholic doctrines I have listed are not taught by Paul in scripture. So where do I find Paul teaching them as part of the gospel in Catholic Tradition?

Perhaps you could use the same litmus test you are pressing on me on yourself in this endeavor. For example: Here are but the first **3 of 40** unbiblical ideas embraced by the Protestant communities. From my article at: [Bible Believing Christian? 40 Unbiblical Protestant Practices and Doctrines](#)

40 examples of UnBiblical ideas/doctrines practiced by the Protestant churches.

#1. Praying to Jesus i.e., the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity.

Praying to Jesus is good, healthy and wise, but it's not Biblical. In fact Jesus himself tells us in Matt 6:9-15 that we should pray to his Father (the First Person of the Blessed Trinity) and he tells us how. That is how we got the "Our Father" or the "Lord's Prayer."

Protestants pray to Jesus because that is what the Apostles taught Christ's early Church to do. But it is UNBiblical. Is it then a "tradition of man" because it is not in the Bible? No, it's a *Tradition/Teaching of the Apostles, or an "Apostolic Tradition" with a Capital T.*

Verses a tradition of man with a lower case t. Apostolic Tradition (Capitol T), along with the Holy Bible is God's way of speaking to us. Together they give us the Gospel of Christ or the Word of God. This is what the Apostles taught and the Holy Bible tells us this in many places.

Here are but *two examples* from the Holy Bible that Christ's Gospel is found in both his written Word, and the oral teachings of his Apostles to his early Church:

"Hold fast to the traditions whether they come in oral or written form." 2 Thess 2:15

"The things which you have heard from me through many witnesses you must hand on to trustworthy men who will be able to teach others." (2 Tim, 2:2)

Praying to *God the Father, the First Person of the Trinity* IS Biblical and our Lord Jesus Christ tells us how in Matt 6:9-15 and he again tells us in Luke 4:8 that it is God the Father alone that should be worshiped. "Jesus answered, It is written: 'Worship the Lord your God and serve him only'" Luke 4:8. We are never commanded to pray or worship Jesus (the Second Person of the Trinity) or even Pray to the Holy Spirit (the Third Person of the Trinity). Both of these ideas are UNBiblical. It is good and healthy and wise to pray to Jesus but the origin of this idea comes from Apostolic Tradition or the Teachings of the Apostles, (Capitol T) *not the Holy Bible*. Apostolic Tradition/Teachings (Capitol T), along with the Holy Bible is God's way of speaking to us, they both give us the Word of God. Just as the Holy Bible tells us.

In the Old Testament the pre-incarnate Son of God, Jesus Christ, is referred to as Jehovah (H3068). In the following verses, the LORD is the translation for the word Jehovah.

Num 21:7 Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, We have sinned, for we have spoken against the LORD, and against thee; pray unto the LORD, that he take away the serpents from us. And Moses prayed for the people. [It was Jesus who met with Moses on mount Sinai.]

1 Sam 7:5 And Samuel said, Gather all Israel to Mizpeh, and I will pray for you unto the LORD.

Jer 42:4 Then Jeremiah the prophet said unto them, I have heard you; behold, I will pray unto the LORD your God according to your words; and it shall come to pass, that whatsoever thing the LORD shall answer you, I will declare it unto you; I will keep nothing back from you.

I conclude that it is biblical to pray to the Lord Jesus Christ, Jehovah, as well as to God the Father, as Jesus did. However, you will not find anyone in scripture teaching or practicing prayer to anyone but God. Prayer to Mary or other dead saints is not taught anywhere in scripture.

#2.

The definition of the Trinity. That the Holy Spirit is eternally coexistent with the Father and the Son, that it is the 3rd person of the Holy Trinity and that it proceeded from the Father and the Son as the Nicene Creed of the 4th century states. In fact the very word "Trinity" is unbiblical. We know this definition

and this term, not because it is in the Holy Bible, but because Christ's Church, which embraced the only Christian Faith for the first 1000+ years of Christianity taught us this. Just as the Holy **"Hold fast to the traditions whether they come in oral or written form." 2 Thess 2:15 It is a teaching of the Apostles outside of Holy Writ.**

For this see [The Doctrine Of The Trinity](#) and [Blinded by Tradition at The Catholic Legate](#).

For the moment I will not respond to the remaining points, but they can be read here: [Bible Believing Christian? 40 Unbiblical Protestant Practices and Doctrines](#).

Excerpts from Daniel's email of 14 April, 2007:

Dear Michael, you seem to be confusing the oral "preaching" of the full Gospel with the "Writing" of the full Gospel. Nowhere does the Apostle Paul say that the "full" Gospel has been "recorded" in words or written down. In fact he says the opposite. Therefore your premise is faulty and which renders your null.

"Hold fast to the traditions whether they come in oral or written form." 2 Thess 2:15

"The things which you have heard from me through many witnesses you must hand on to trustworthy men who will be able to teach others." (2 Tim, 2:2)

See: http://www.catholic.com/library/Apostolic_Tradition.asp

The Catholic concept of apostolic oral Tradition does not confuse me.

In my original email I asked you to produce Paul's verbatim teaching of 6 specific doctrines from this alleged repository of Catholic Tradition. Can you cite Paul teaching them or not?

Of course Catholics can't do any such thing. Paul did not teach them because he knew nothing of these alleged Traditions. None of the Apostles knew or taught them. The apostolic oral Tradition of the Catholic Church is an empty box, a myth, without the slightest bit of substance in it.

Paul simply did not teach the Catholic gospel, consequently Paul's condemnation [Gal 1:8-9] applies to those who teach it. If I want to know precisely what the apostolic church taught, there is only one trustworthy infallible source, and that is the Bible.

I am very interested in your reply to the following logic arguments. They are very straight forward. Will you please address them. For many Christians have embraced belief systems they have not tested for apostolicity.

I am asking you for proof from Catholic Tradition that 6 doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church were taught by the Apostle Paul. Where and when did Paul, or any of the apostles teach them?

I just want to believe as the Apostles taught Christ's early Church, no matter where it leads me and no matter what it costs me. Do you feel the same way?

And we would probably agree that the Bible is a reliable doctrinal teacher, that the New Testament presents the pure apostolic gospel. The Catholic Church, however, teaches that the fullness of the Catholic gospel is only available with the addition of apostolic Tradition, which by its own definition is *not found in scripture*. So the question I am posing is this: please cite in Catholic Tradition where Paul or the other Apostles taught those six doctrines? How can this be totally absent, yet maintain the apostolic church of the first century believed and taught them?

The laws of deductive logic tell us:

If the premises of a valid argument are true, then its conclusion must also be true.
and
It is impossible for the conclusion of a valid argument to be false while its premises are true.

- A. All boys are human.
- B. Billy is a boy.
- C. Therefore Billy is human.

The premises in this case are true, therefore Billy is human.
(For a crash course in deductive logic and the laws thereof visit:
<http://www.philosophypages.com/lg/e01.htm>

And likewise:

- A. In the first millennium, there was but one Christian Faith.
- B. The apostles lived in the first millennium.
- C. **Therefore the faith of the first millennium, was the faith of the apostles** (and therefore that of the Holy Bible).

The Faith of the 1st millennium was the Catholic or Universal Faith (Catholic or Katholikos in Greek) Faith. All Bible Believing Christians should "Test" premise A as the Holy Bible commands:

**“Test everything. Hold on to the good. Avoid every kind of evil.”
1 Thessalonians 5:21-22**

Test premise A. If one cannot find any of the Protestant theologies predating the renaissance era, nor even the 10th century, why would one erroneously assume the Apostles taught these ideas in the 1st century? No Protestant idea was taught in the first 1000+ years of Christianity. No Protestant idea was taught before the renaissance era. For the invention of Protestantism and the Protestant belief system was born in the middle if not the latter half of the second millennium. 1000+ years after the Apostles wrote the Holy Bible. One can not find a single Christian who taught Protestant ideas or embraced the Protestant belief system in any shape or form.

The Protestant Reformation was fueled by the availability of the Bible in the vernacular, when people could read what it had to say for themselves. In doing so they could see that much of what they had been taught was not only not found in scripture, but was flatly contradicted by scripture.

The Protestant motto *Sola Scriptura* does not promote "new" doctrines, it proclaims a return to the pure doctrinal teaching of the Apostles as found in the Bible, and rejects the novel unbiblical Traditions of the Catholic Church, just as Jesus rejected the Traditions of the scribes and Pharisees. To be sure, however, many Protestants still hold to and teach Catholic Traditions that are contrary to the *Sola Scriptura* principle (like Sunday keeping replacing the Sabbath). For this they can rightly be criticized as not really teaching or following the "Bible Only".



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Sola Scriptura and Bible Availability

When discussing the topic of *Sola Scriptura* (the Bible only for doctrine) with Catholics, you are like to run into something similar to the following rational from the Experts Forum of EWTN to discredit it:

**[Availability of the Bible in early history](#)
[Question from Brian on 12-05-1999:](#)**

I have three arguments, dealing with the history of the early Church, against those who believe in the "Bible Alone" theory, and I'm wondering about the validity of these statements:

1) Isn't it true that written manuscripts, of any kind, were VERY rare to the "common folk" and peasants back in the days of the early Church?

2) Isn't it true that a full-length Bible would be VERY expensive back then, virtually putting it out of the reach of most of these common folk?

3) Isn't it true that most peasants and commoners simply couldn't read or write back in the time of the early Church, so even if they did have a Bible, it wouldn't do them much good without some oral teaching?

Based upon these 3 statements, it seems to me that its simply common sense to say that oral tradition was necessary in early Church history, to keep Christ's teachings alive. Are these fair statements to make?

Answer by Warren H. Carroll, Ph.D on 12-06-1999:

These are all excellent arguments against Sola Scripture.

The above premise is that Sola Scriptura fails if you do not have access to or own a personal copy of the Bible, but that is a total misconception of the Sola Scriptura principal. It is quite true that the Protestants made every effort to put a vernacular Bible into the hands of the laity despite strenuous efforts of the Catholic Church to prevent it. Protestants wanted everyone to be able to read the Word of God in their own tongue, in a Bible they could call their own, but that is not the meaning of Sola Scriptura. The term was coined by Martin Luther, who was trying to reform the Church and return it to scriptural truths that Tradition had so effectively obscured. Sola Scriptura is epitomized by Martin Luther's appearance at the Diet of Worms:

The Archbishop of Trier, John Eck asked Martin Luther:

I ask you, Martin - answer candidly and without horns - do you or do you not repudiate your books and the errors which they contain?

To which Luther replied,

Since then Your Majesty and your lordships desire a simple reply, I will answer without horns and without teeth. Unless I am convicted by Scripture and plain reason - I do not accept the authority of popes and councils, for they have contradicted each other - my conscience is captive to the Word of God. I cannot and I will not recant anything, for to go against conscience is neither right nor safe. Here I stand, I can do no other. God help me. Amen. (Martin Luther, the Diet of Worms - April 18, 1521)

Because the Bible was effectively locked away from the common people while in Latin, and very scarce too, the reformers felt compelled to translate it into the common languages that people could read, and make it cheaply, so that *every* church might have one. Even the average person could then hope to eventually own and read his own copy of the Bible. But distribution of the

Bible among the laity was viewed as a dangerous threat to Catholic authority and Church Tradition and stirred the anger of the Church, whose Traditions were exposed as apostasy. They diligently went about banning and burning as many vernacular Bibles (and its owner or translator) as they could get their hands on, until the task became unmanageable, and then impossibly huge.

The Catholic mentality was that if the Bible could be kept scarce (in the custody of the Church) and in Latin, the laity would remain ignorant of what it really contained, and Church Authority and Tradition would be unchallenged. The Catholic Church also claimed sole authority to interpret Scripture's meaning, and declared anyone who dared to depart from its definitions (like Martin Luther) was a criminal, punishable under the law:

Furthermore, to check unbridled spirits, it [the Catholic Church] decrees that no one relying on his own judgment shall, in matters of faith and morals pertaining to the edification of Christian Doctrine, distorting the Holy Scriptures in accordance with his own conception, presume to interpret them contrary to that sense which holy Mother Church, to whom it belongs to judge of their true sense and interpretation, has held and holds, or even contrary to the unanimous teaching of the Fathers, even though such interpretations should never at any time be published. Those who act contrary to this shall be made known by the ordinaries and punished in accordance with the penalties prescribed by the law.

Source: Council of Trent, Fourth Session, April 8th, 1546, Decree Concerning the Edition and Use of the Sacred Books, *Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent*, English Translation by Rev. H. J. Schroeder, O.P., copyright 1978 and published by Tan Books and publishers, ISBN: 0:89555-074-1, pages 18-19.

Martin Luther was standing firmly on Scripture as his only guide and counselor regarding doctrine, and not the dictates of popes or Church councils which were contrary to the Word of God and promoted their own unbiblical Traditions. This is the true meaning of Sola Scriptura, and it is not dependent on the availability of the Bible to each and every person. Were there only a single copy of the Bible in existence, Sola Scriptura would not be diminished in the slightest degree. It would still contain the authentic Word of God and be the only sure ruler for faith and doctrine, to the complete exclusion of Church Councils, Traditions, and Papal decrees. One need not be able to read, or even have a Bible, for Sola Scriptura to be in effect.

Let the pulpits and churches echo with the doctrines of the Gospel found in God's Word, the Holy Scriptures, and not with the Traditions and decrees of men, whether there be only one Bible or as many as the leaves of Autumn - *that* is Sola Scriptura and the only safe ground on which to stand!

Mat 7:24 **Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:**

Mat 7:25 **And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that**

house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.

Mat 7:26 And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand:

Mat 7:27 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.

Mat 7:28 And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine:

Mat 7:29 For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.



<http://www.aloha.net/~mikesch/>

Does Sola Scriptura *Fail* Because There Are *Thousands* of Protestant Denominations?

When discussing the Protestant slogan of Sola Scriptura, the *Bible only* for doctrine, Catholics will commonly assert something like the following: Since there are literally *thousands* of different Protestant sects and denominations, having quite different interpretations of scripture, this proves that Sola Scriptura is obviously an unworkable failure, since God is *not* the author of confusion. The assertion is that if Sola Scriptura were true, and working successfully, only one interpretation or understanding of any given doctrine would be clearly evident to all, and that interpretation would be universally taught and practiced, without any deviations.

Noah spent 120 years building the ark (Gen 6:3), and preached to a doomed and dying world as he was building. Yet, after so many years of preaching, only 8 people entered into the ark (Gen 7:13, 1 Pet 3:20). Was Noah a *failure* at preaching the word of God because so few were saved and uncounted thousands were lost?

Isa 55:6 Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near:

Isa 55:7 Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

Isa 55:8 For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD.

Isa 55:9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Isa 55:10 For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater:

Isa 55:11 **So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me**

void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.

Noah was a faithful servant and prophet of God, and so was speaking for God to his generation, and as indicated in Isa 55:11, *God's word does not fail to accomplish His purpose*. Noah successfully accomplished the task set before him by God, and *all* the righteous of the earth entered into the completed ark, though it was only eight people, and *all* the wicked perished. The measure of Noah's success was NOT how few were saved, and neither was the comparatively large number of those lost an indication of failure on his part or on the part of God. The real question is what percentage of the faithful and righteous were saved? Since God and His word do not fail in His purpose, 100% of the righteous were saved and 100% of the wicked were lost, and that is the measure of success: 100%. None of the truly righteous will be lost (John 17:12, 18:9), and all of the wicked will surely perish, even though the righteous will be vastly outnumbered by the wicked:

Mat 7:13 **Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:**

Mat 7:14 **Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.**

During His ministry on earth, Jesus many times publicly taught by using parables (Matt 13:3) to illustrate important spiritual truths, and sometimes even His disciples needed to ask Jesus to explain a parable's meaning (John 10:6). At times, even when speaking clearly, without using parables, Jesus was not immediately understood by His disciples:

Mark 9:31 For he taught his disciples, and said unto them, **The Son of man is delivered into the hands of men, and they shall kill him; and after that he is killed, he shall rise the third day.**

Mark 9:32 But they understood not that saying, and were afraid to ask him.

Luke 9:43 And they were all amazed at the mighty power of God. But while they wondered every one at all things which Jesus did, he said unto his disciples,

Luke 9:44 **Let these sayings sink down into your ears: for the Son of man shall be delivered into the hands of men.**

Luke 9:45 But they understood not this saying, and it was hid from them, that they perceived it not: and they feared to ask him of that saying.

Was Jesus a failure because His disciples did not immediately understand what he was saying?

Luke 24:6 He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee,

Luke 24:7 Saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.

Luke 24:8 And they remembered his words,

Luke 24:9 And returned from the sepulchre, and told all these things unto the eleven, and to all the rest.

John 14:29 **And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe.**

There are times when it suits God's purpose that His words NOT be understood at the time they are spoken, but rather at a later time. On one occasion, Jesus was even opposed in what He was trying to teach by the apostle Peter:

Mat 16:21 From that time forth began Jesus to show unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day.

Mat 16:22 Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee.

Mat 16:23 But he turned, and said unto Peter, **Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.**

After telling the parable of the sower to a great multitude, Jesus was approached by His disciples in private, who asked Him why He found it necessary to teach in parables, and the answer He gave is quite revealing:

Mat 13:9 **Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.**

Mat 13:10 And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables?

Mat 13:11 He answered and said unto them, **Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.**

Mat 13:12 **For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath.**

Mat 13:13 **Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand.**

Mat 13:14 **And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive:**

Mat 13:15 **For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.**

Mat 13:16 **But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear.**

Mark 4:9 And he said unto them, **He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.**

Mark 4:10 And when he was alone, they that were about him with the twelve asked of him the parable.

Mark 4:11 And he said unto them, **Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables:**

Mark 4:12 **That seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them.**

Luke 8:8 ... **He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.**

Luke 8:9 And his disciples asked him, saying, What might this parable be?

Luke 8:10 And he said, **Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand.**

Was the measure of Jesus' success at teaching, the number of people that *understood perfectly* what He was saying, or was His failure measured by the number of people that walked away without understanding? No, those who had "ears to hear" would understand. Those, who for whatever reason did not want to hear, did not understand. The apostle Paul also explains why this is so:

Acts 28:23 And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him [Paul] into his lodging; to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening.

Acts 28:24 And some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not.

Acts 28:25 And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers,

Acts 28:26 Saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive:

Acts 28:27 For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.

Acts 28:28 Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it.

1 Cor 2:12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

1 Cor 2:13 Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

1 Cor 2:14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

Heb 4:2 For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.

The word of God is clearly not intended to be understood by everyone:

Dan 12:10 Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand.

Scripture is, in fact, a method of separating the sheep from the goats, so to speak, a way of separating those with "ears to hear" from those who do not want to hear. Scripture does not fail in its purpose of instructing the "sheep" simply because there are so many goats that do not understand, because the sheep *will* hear, and *will* understand, at the appointed time that suits God's purpose. Sola Scriptura, the Bible only for doctrine, similarly cannot be labeled an unworkable failure because so many Protestants disagree on points of doctrine, for the simple reason that not all Protestants are sheep, though they may claim to be, and may even *appear* to be sheep:

Mat 7:15 **Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.**

Mat 7:21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

Mat 7:22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?

Mat 7:23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

Mat 7:24 Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:

Mat 7:25 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.

Mat 7:26 And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand:

Mat 7:27 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.

Luke 15:4 What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?

Luke 15:5 And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing.

Luke 15:6 And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost.

Luke 15:7 I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.

The sheep *will* hear Jesus' voice through His word, and follow Him, and *not one* of the sheep will be lost. Sola Scriptura is *not* an unworkable failure, because God's word simply *cannot* fail. So, those that have ears to hear, let them hear and understand what inspired scripture says.

John 10:14 I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.

John 10:24 Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly.

John 10:25 Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me.

John 10:26 But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you.

John 10:27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

John 10:28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.

John 10:29 My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.



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Sola Ecclesia Romanus

Only the Church of Rome is the Rule of Faith


Rome The Only Infallible Interpreter of Scripture:

10. ... God Himself has set up a living authority to establish and teach the true and legitimate meaning of His heavenly revelation. This authority judges infallibly all disputes which concern matters of faith and morals, lest the faithful be swirled around by every wind of doctrine which springs from the evilness of men in encompassing error. And this living infallible authority is active only in that Church which was built by Christ the Lord upon Peter, the head of the entire Church, leader and shepherd, whose faith He promised would never fail. This Church has had an unbroken line of succession from Peter himself; these legitimate pontiffs are the heirs and defenders of the same teaching, rank, office and power. And the Church is where Peter is,[5] and Peter speaks in the Roman Pontiff,[6] living at all times in his successors and making judgment,[7] providing the truth of the faith to those who seek it.[8] The divine words therefore mean what this Roman See of the most blessed Peter holds and has held.

Source:  [QUI PLURIBUS](#), (On Faith And Religion), Encyclical of Pope Pius IX, November 9, 1846.

Catholic Doctrine (Not Scripture) Is The Supreme Law :

14. ... Catholic doctrine, as authoritatively proposed by the Church, should be held as the supreme law; for, seeing that the same God is the author both of the Sacred Books and of the doctrine committed to the Church, it is clearly impossible that any teaching can by legitimate means be extracted from the former, which shall in any respect be at variance with the latter. Hence it follows that all interpretation is foolish and false which either makes the sacred writers disagree one with another, or is opposed to the doctrine of the Church.

Source:  [PROVIDENTISSIMUS DEUS](#), (On the Study of Holy Scripture), Encyclical of Pope Leo XIII dated November 18th, 1893.

Traditions, it will be seen, are placed before the Bible in this [Roman Catholic] epitome of faith. Indeed, the Word of God, as a rule of belief and conduct is, in effect, done away; and the interpretations of the church are put in its place. So that in every case, the inquiry of the faithful Romanist must be — not what saith the scripture — but, *what saith "Mother Church?"* Not to follow the church, however opposed she may be to the Bible, would be a violation of his oath.

The celebrated Council of Trent, which was called by a Bull of Pope Paul III, in the year 1542, decreed that the Roman Catholic church received and venerated with equal affection of piety and

reverence, the Bible and traditions. "*Omnes libros tam veteris quam novi Testamenti, — nec non Traditiones — pari pietatis affectu ac reverentia suscipit, et veneratur.*" When, however, tradition was not in accordance with the Word of God, it would be manifestly impossible to conform to this decree, unless a man could conscientiously receive and reverence a truth and its opposite error at the same time. And therefore, to relieve the conscience of the Romanist, it was necessary that the right of interpreting the Bible should be given exclusively to Mother Church, who is also the keeper of Tradition. Hence the Papist has, in fact and strictly speaking, only one standard of faith, and that is neither the Bible nor Tradition, but the Church. He professes, indeed, to acknowledge both the scripture and tradition; but he is really bound to receive and obey whatever Mother Church declares to be the truth as contained in the Bible and Tradition. She must decide for him in every case, and from her judgment there can be no appeal. ...

Tradition is one of the most essential subjects of dispute between Protestants and Romanists. The Romanists declare that the Scriptures alone are not sufficient for Salvation; but that there is the word of God, by *hearsay*, which is superior to the word of God in *writing*. By this *hearsay*, for tradition is nothing else, they assure the world that the Scripture must be explained; so that if the Scripture says *white*, and tradition says *black*, a Roman Catholic is bound to say, that *white* means *black* in God's written word.

Source: *The Great Red Dragon; Or The Master-key To Popery*, by Anthony Gavin, published in 1854 in Boston by Samuel Jones, 86 Washington Street, pages 250-251, 328-329.

Sola Ecclesia Romanus as Taught in Catholic Catechisms

Catechism of the Catholic Church

85 "The task of giving an authentic interpretation of the Word of God, whether in its written form [Scripture] or in the form of Tradition, has been entrusted to the living, teaching office of the Church alone. Its authority in this matter is exercised in the name of Jesus Christ."⁴⁷ This means that the task of interpretation has been entrusted to the bishops in communion with the successor of Peter, the Bishop of Rome.

Source: [Catechism of the Catholic Church](#), published by Liguori Publications, English translation copyright 1994 by the United States Catholic Conference, Inc., Libreria Editrice Vaticana, page 27.

Deharbe's Full Catechism of the Catholic Religion

24. And why do we say that through the Catholic Church alone we infallibly know the true meaning of the Scriptures and of tradition?

Because the Catholic Church alone is *'the pillar and ground of the truth'* (1 Tim. iii. 15), and, therefore, cannot err in the interpretation of the Word of God.

25. May no one, then, presume to explain the Scripture and Tradition contrary to the interpretation of the Catholic Church?

No; for this would be as if ye understood the Scriptures and Tradition better than the Holy Ghost, who inspires the Church with the true meaning of it.

26. But is the meaning of the Holy Scriptures not clear in itself, and easy to be understood by every one?

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No; for the Holy Scripture is a Divine and mysterious book, *'in which,'* as St. Peter says, speaking of the Epistles of St. Paul, *'are certain things hard to be understood, which the unlearned and unstable wrest to their own destruction'* (2 Peter iii. 16).

'What else gives rise to so many heresies, save that the Scripture, which is good in itself, is ill understood?' (St. Augustine).

27. It is not, then, true that the Bible alone is the only Rule of Faith? Or, in other words; Is not every private individual to search the Bible, and nothing but the Bible, until he finds out what he has to believe?

No; for not the Bible alone, but the Bible and Tradition, *both* infallibly interpreted by the Church, are the right Rule of Faith. ...

28. What has the Church decreed with regard to the reading of the Bible in the vulgar tongue?

1. That we should have the learning and piety requisite for it; and 2. That the translation should be accompanied with explanations, and that both should be approved by the Church.

By this wise provision the Church by no means intends to withhold the Word of God from the faithful, since she desires

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nothing more than that all should know it and meditate upon it; she merely wishes to guard them against corrupted Bibles, which are often designedly offered to ignorant people, and against erroneous interpretations, sects, and schisms.

Application. In matters of faith never trust your own judgment, but always humbly submit to the decisions of Holy Church; for when you believe what the Church teaches, you believe the Word of God.

Source: *Deharbe's Catechism, A Full Catechism of the Catholic Religion*, translated from the German by the Rev. John Fander, fifth American edition, revised, enlarged, and edited by the Right Rev. P. N. Lynch, D.D., Bishop of Charleston, copyright 1876 by L. Kehoe, published in New York by Schwartz, Kirwin & Fauss, 42 Barclay Street, pages 75-77.

Keenan's Controversial Catechism

Q. *What is the rule of faith adopted by Catholics?*

A. All truly inspired Scripture, and all truly divine tradition, interpreted by the teaching body of the Church, — that is, by the pastors to whom Christ said, "Go *teach* all nations." This teaching body, when taken collectively with the chief Pastor at their head, all Catholics believe to be infallible, — that is, they cannot teach any error against the faith or morals. Now, if this great fundamental truth be clearly laid down in Scripture, then Catholics will be quite safe in following the teaching of their pastors; then the *teaching* body will be, to the *taught*, an infallible rule of faith. Mark well, we do not maintain that the pastors of the Church are, of themselves, infallible, but that God has made them so, for the benefit of his people, and that Christ himself teaches by their lips.

Source: *Controversial Catechism*, by the Rev. Stephen Keenan, Second Edition, published in 1851 in Edinburgh; by C. Dolman, 13 South Hanover Street, and 61, New Bond Street, London, page 64.

St. Paul Family Catechism

152. What is Sacred Tradition?

Sacred or Apostolic Tradition is the Word of God entrusted by Christ the Lord and the Holy Spirit to the Apostles, and handed down by them to their successors in its full purity (Jn. 21:25; 2 Tm. 1:13-14; 2:2; 2 Thes. 2:15), so that, led by the light of the Spirit of truth, they may, in proclaiming it, preserve this word of God faithfully, explain it, and make it more widely known.

Therefore, both Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition are to be accepted and venerated with the same loyalty and reverence.

153. What is the Magisterium?

The Magisterium is the living teaching office of the Church, whose authority is exercised in the name of Jesus Christ. The Roman Pontiff and the Bishops teaching in communion with him, have the task of authentically interpreting the Word of God, whether written or handed down, guarding it scrupulously and explaining it faithfully in accord with a divine commission and with the help of the Holy Spirit

Source: *St. Paul Family Catechism*, Third Edition, copyright 1992 by the Daughters of St. Paul, published by St Paul Books and Media, 50 St. Paul Ave., Boston, MA 02130, page 90.



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A Review and Rebuttal of Steve Ray's Article, *Why the Bereans Rejected Sola Scriptura*.

"This Bereans passage has been commandeered by Fundamentalists for too long, and it is time Catholics reclaim it." —Former Baptist Steve Ray, *This Rock*, March, 1997, p. 24.

by James White

Steve Ray is a nice guy. At least, we've had some civil discourse in the past via the Internet. He seems like an honest man who is convinced that the position he now embraces—Roman Catholicism—is the true and proper position to take. I start by acknowledging this, for I don't want anyone to think that I hold him any malice. I say this because beyond my recognizing his personal civility, I find little else in his written works that is commendable.

Steve Ray is the first person to tell you he is not a scholar. He's a layman who, as a Baptist, decided he needed to convert to the Roman Catholic faith. He has written a book, *Crossing the Tiber*, in which he defends his choice. As soon as I obtained the book, I noted a number of *glaring* deficiencies in the work: numerous errors in representing Protestant theology, a complete failure to interact with *any* level of Protestant apologetic response, etc. I informed Mr. Ray of this by e-mail.

In response, Mr. Ray indicated that his book simply developed out of a long letter to his parents defending his choice to leave the Baptist faith and embrace the Roman. He asserted that it was not intended as an in-depth analysis of Protestant theology. This did not exactly satisfy my concerns with how often it completely missed the point of the debate, but I certainly accepted that this is how Mr. Ray views his book.

It was with some real consternation, therefore, that I read the March, 1997 issue of *This Rock* magazine published by *Catholic Answers*. I have long criticized *Catholic Answers* for using a straw-man view of *sola scriptura* in their publications—a practice that, despite my criticisms, they continue unabated. But in this issue we find an article titled, *Why the Bereans Rejected Sola Scriptura* written by none other than Steve Ray. Now, an article in *This Rock* cannot logically be considered an extension of a letter to Mr. Ray's parents. This is "new" material. The article describes Mr. Ray as one who engages "in apologetic work in Michigan." This is a work specifically designed to be used to convince Protestants that their view of *sola scriptura* is in error. Hence, I expected a little higher standard in something like this.

The Old Anti-Catholic Ploy

Unfortunately, though Mr. Ray does his best to avoid inflammatory speech in personal conversation, the same is not the case regarding his article in *This Rock*. While avoiding a lot of the "shots" that mark normal *Catholic Answers* type material (see examples elsewhere on our web page, including our [response to a CA article on sola scriptura](#), as well as our rebuttal of a [recent attack by James Akin](#)), Ray falls prey to the old "anti-Catholic" ploy. It's a false form of argumentation that *Catholic Answers* uses with regularity (they are hardly the only ones to do so, of course!). It's an invalid attempt to claim the "high ground" by calling anyone who disagrees with you and with your position an "anti-Catholic," while referring to yourself merely as an "apologist." Hence, you make your opponent look like the

aggressor, while you are the defender, even when, in point of fact, you are attacking *their* position (and failing to do a whole lot to actually define and defend your own).

Mr. Ray begins by identifying Dave Hunt's organization as an "anti-Catholic" organization. Later he makes the term "Fundamentalist" a synonym for "anti-Catholic," and uses the phrase "anti-Catholic" more times, saying, "From the perspective of anti-Catholics, the *Thessalonians* would have been more noble-minded" and later, "Anti-Catholics love to associate themselves with the Bereans. . . ." It is quite honestly a shame to see Mr. Ray falling into the "us vs. them" mentality so soon after his conversion (1994). I truly doubt he refers to himself as an "anti-Protestant," so why he would adopt such terminology of others is difficult to understand, outside, that is, of the polemics of Roman Catholic apologists. I would like to call upon Mr. Ray (and all Roman Catholic apologists) to cease and desist in their use of such ploy.

Sola Scriptura: Misrepresented AGAIN

The main criticism that can be lodged against Mr. Ray's work is quite simple: he does not accurately portray (or possibly even understand) the Protestant position that he has abandoned, and is now intent upon attacking. This is a common problem in Roman Catholic apologetics: and the fact that many Protestants don't know their faith very well, and hence allow such misrepresentations to pass without comment or correction, only exacerbates the situation.

Now, immediately, someone may say, "Yes, well, both sides always say that about the other." That's true. But there is a major difference: when we say someone has misrepresented the Protestant position, we demonstrate this by documenting what the Protestant position *is*, and how, *in context*, the Roman Catholic writer *should* have known better. We have explained what *sola scriptura* is over and over again in our apologetic writings and books. Mr. Ray *owns* my books on Roman Catholicism. He *could have* (if he wished) availed himself of many sources that would have saved him from the error of misrepresentation and straw-man argumentation. But he did not avail himself of those sources. Why? Only he can answer that question.

We begin with the following presentation:

Sola scriptura, or the "Bible only," is a Protestant doctrine invented in the fifteenth century. It declares the Bible is the sole source of revelation and the only and final judge in all matters of the Christian faith. Martin Luther developed it as a reaction to the historic teachings of the Catholic Church and of the Fathers of the first centuries. Luther rejected the authority of the Church and the apostolic tradition and so was left with *sola scriptura*—the Bible alone.

It is hard to know where to begin. This is substantially the same kind of presentation made in his book *Crossing the Tiber*. However, in that book, he accurately identified the Reformation as taking place in the 16th, not the 15th, century. Since he claims Luther developed the doctrine, and Luther did not even begin his theological work until (at the earliest) 1510, how Ray can speak of the "fifteenth century" is difficult to understand. But this is just the beginning of the errors. Martin Luther didn't invent the doctrine, of course. Even if Ray disputes every single statement from the Fathers that I have provided in written sources (see my chapter in *Sola Scriptura: The Protestant Position on the Bible*, 1995, Soli Deo Gloria Publishers, pp. 27-62), and rejects every Waldensian statement concerning the doctrine, he would still have to deal with the plain words of John Wyclif, who obviously believed in the doctrine and put it into practice. Such was the place of the doctrine, even under such an artificial construction as being the invention of Wyclif, in the *fourteenth* century, more than a century before Luther. If Mr. Ray encountered a Protestant who, in discussing Roman Catholic dogmatic formulations, misidentified the source of such formulations, and misplaced the dates by centuries, would he not have reason to question the validity of that person's conclusions?

But far more damaging is the simple fact that Mr. Ray does not know what *sola scriptura* is. *Sola scriptura* does not say the Bible is the "sole source of revelation." Such is a basic, fundamental mistake on the level of saying, "The Immaculate Conception means Mary didn't need a Savior." Such would indicate that the person making the statement has never seriously interacted with any apologetic defense of the Immaculate Conception. In the same way, Mr. Ray's writings show a *consistent* pattern as he has not interacted with any serious Protestant apologetics works, either. Or, if he has, he gives no evidence of it.

Sola scriptura says the Scriptures are the sole infallible rule of faith for the Church. It does not deny the existence of "general revelation" in nature (hence the error of saying the "sole source of revelation"). It is interesting to note, however, that Mr. Ray, in his zeal for the Roman position, ends up taking the most conservative, traditional *partim-partim* viewpoint of tradition and revelation, for while many modern Roman Catholic theologians are moving toward abandoning the "two-source" view of revelation, Mr. Ray states his adherence to it plainly a number of times in his article (we shall note them in passing). Mr. Ray is a former Baptist. Hence, he might want to be familiar with what the Baptists in 1689 placed in their Confession of Faith:

The whole counsel of God, concerning all things necessary for His own glory, man's salvation, faith and life, is either expressly set down or necessarily contained in Holy Scripture: unto which nothing at any time is to be added, whether by new revelations of the Spirit, or traditions of men. Nevertheless, we acknowledge the inward illumination of the Spirit of God to be necessary for the saving understanding of such things as are revealed in the Word; and that there are some circumstances concerning the worship of God, and government of the Church, common to human actions and societies, which are to be ordered by the light of nature, and Christian prudence, according to the general rules of the Word, which are always to be observed.

The sufficiency of Scripture is clearly asserted, but it is a sufficiency carefully defined. No one claims the Bible is an omnipedia of all knowledge. Nor does anyone claim the Bible can tell you, specifically, what color fabric to place upon the pews of your new church building. But all things that are "necessary" for God's "own glory, man's salvation, faith and life, is either expressly set down or necessarily contained in Holy Scripture." How like the words of Augustine:

What more shall I teach you than what we read in the apostle? For Holy Scripture fixes the rule for our doctrine, lest we dare to be wiser than we ought. Therefore I should not teach you anything else except to expound to you the words of the Teacher. (*De bono viduitatis*, 2)

Note well the words of Augustine: he says that the Scriptures fix "the rule for our doctrine." The Latin of the passage reads, "*Scriptura nostra doctrinam regulam figit*." Protestants say the Scriptures are the infallible *regula fidei*, the rule of faith. It seems Augustine believed the same.

Now before too many of our Roman Catholic readers blow a gasket, I well know that Augustine asserted the Church has a role in preserving the truth, and especially when Augustine had to struggle against Donatism (and the influence of Cyprian), he appealed to "tradition." Yet, he did *not* appeal to tradition. Rome now teaches it, and did *not* deny *sola scriptura* so as to present a doctrine of *sola ecclesia*. Note his own words:

You ought to notice particularly and store in your memory that God wanted to lay a firm foundation in the Scriptures against treacherous errors, a foundation against which no one dares to speak who would in any way be considered a Christian. For when He offered Himself to them to touch, this did not suffice Him unless He also confirmed the heart of the believers from the Scriptures, for He foresaw that the time would come when we would not have anything to touch but would have something to read (In *Epistola Johannis tractus*, 2).

The issue is not, and never has been, the validity of "tradition" as a *subordinate* authority. I above cited from the 1689 Baptist Confession of Faith. It is a "subordinate standard," a "tradition" if you wish, that gives expression to certain aspects of divine truth. But it is not revelational, nor is it infallible. It is *subordinate* to Scripture, and liable to correction on the basis thereof. The Lord Jesus gave us the example in Matthew 15: we are to subordinate *all* traditions, even those that men claim are "divine" in origin, to the *ultimate* authority of Scripture. In this we agree with Basil of Caesarea:

The hearers taught in the Scriptures ought to test what is said by teachers and accept that which agrees with the Scriptures but reject that which is foreign. (*Moralia*, 72:1)

And likewise with Cyril of Jerusalem:

In regard to the divine and holy mysteries of the faith, not the least part may be handed on without the Holy Scriptures. Do not be led astray by winning words and clever arguments. Even to me, who tell these things, do not give ready belief, unless you receive from the Holy Scriptures the proof of the truth which I announce. The salvation in which we believe is not proved from clever reasoning, but from the Holy Scriptures. (*Catechetical Lectures* 4:17)

I note in passing that such citations, likewise, refute Mr. Ray's assertion that Luther was rejecting the "teachings of the Fathers of the first centuries." In reality, it is Mr. Ray who has abandoned them in embracing of doctrines such as the Bodily Assumption of Mary and the Immaculate Conception.

The main element of Mr. Ray's misrepresentation of *sola scriptura* can be seen in just this: the doctrine speaks of a rule of faith that *exists*. What do I mean by this? One will search high and low for any reference in any standard Protestant confession of faith that says, "There has never been a time when God's Word was proclaimed and transmitted orally." You will never find anyone saying, "During times of enscripturation—that is, when new revelation was being given—*sola scriptura* was operational." Protestants do not assert that *sola scriptura* is a valid concept during times of revelation. How could it be since the rule of faith to which it points was at that very time coming into being? One must have an *existing* rule of faith to say it is "sufficient." It is a canard to point to times of revelation and say, "*Sola scriptura* doesn't work there!" Of course it doesn't. Who said it did?

But immediately the Roman Catholic apologist makes a fatal logical error: "Well, if there was a time when God's Word was orally transmitted, why can't it be today?" Such assumes the very thing Rome would never dare step out and prove: that her self-proclaimed "traditions" are in fact, inspired revelation that existed since the days of the Apostles. Indeed, many Roman apologists deny that tradition is in fact *theopneustoj*: God-breathed (2 Timothy 3:16). *Some* of "Tradition" may be inspired (i.e., Scripture), but many are uncomfortable having to defend the idea that "oral tradition" is in fact revelation and is inspired. If the Roman apologist wishes to say, "Well, there was a time when God-breathed revelation was orally transmitted prior to the enscripturization of that revelation," that's fine. But to go beyond this statement and say "And, that situation continues today, so that our traditions are equal with Scripture in authority" is to step out of the realm of both scriptural teaching and historical reality. It is a self-evident fact that a doctrine such as the Bodily Assumption of Mary has no historical connection to the Apostles themselves. To make it an inspired "tradition" is to say revelation is still being given (a position even Rome denies).

Sola scriptura speaks to the Church as she exists in her normative state. Times of revelation are not normative. They are now passed. So how does the Church have sure access to the truths of God today? By reference to nebulous, a-historical traditions, or to the sure and unchanging Word of God in the Scriptures? *Sola scriptura* says the Church always has an ultimate authority to which to turn: and that authority is the *Church* isn't that ultimate authority! The Church is in need of revelation from Her Lord, and that she has it in Scripture, not in "traditions" that are uncertain. [For more information on this topic, see *The Roman Catholic Controversy*, pp. 55-101.]

The Bereans and *sola scriptura*

Mr. Ray's article has a text block that reads as follows:

The Berean Jews accepted oral teaching, the tradition of the Apostles, as equal to Scripture, in addition to, and as an "extension" of the Torah.

The article attempts to undermine the use of Acts 17:11 as a "proof-text" for *sola scriptura* by arguing that in point of fact the Bereans did not operate on a basis consistent with Protestant claims regarding the supremacy of Scripture. Mr. Ray states that the Catholic response to this passage has often been "mediocre." But, he claims, "Not only can the text be explained easily by Catholics, but it is actually a strong argument against *sola scriptura* and a convincing defense of the teaching of the Catholic Church." Such is a pretty tall claim! Does Mr. Ray succeed in his task? Let's start by looking at the passage in question.

(Acts 17:10-12) The brethren immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea, and when they arrived, they went into the synagogue of the Jews. [11] Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so. [12] Therefore many of them believed, along with a number of prominent Greek women and men.

One of the key phrases is "these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica," so Ray goes back and looks at what had happened there:

(Acts 17:1-9) Now when they had traveled through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews. [2] And according to Paul's custom, he went in there, and for three Sabbaths reasoned with them from the Scriptures, [3] explaining and giving evidence that the Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead, and saying, "This Jesus whom I am proclaiming to you is the Christ." [4] And some of them were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, a number of the God-fearing Greeks and a number of the leading women. [5] But the Jews becoming jealous and taking along some wicked men from the market place, formed a mob and set the city in an uproar; and attacking the house of Jason, they were seeking to bring them out to the people. When they did not find them, they began dragging Jason and some brethren before the city authorities, shouting, "These men who have upset the world have come here also; [7] and Jason has welcomed them, and they all act contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, Jesus." [8] They stirred up the crowd and the city authorities who heard these things. [9] And when they had received a pledge from Jason and the others, they released them.

Now, before we look at Mr. Ray's ingenious argument, let's examine the passage and see what Luke has to tell us. We see that Paul, as was his custom, went into the synagogue as the first mission "starting point" upon arriving in Thessalonica. This was his custom everywhere he went, for he would find the place where the Scriptures were known and hence a common ground could be established. For three weeks he reasoned with them from the Scriptures, using the Old Testament (as we call it today) to demonstrate the truth about the Messiah. Paul met with some success, for some Jews, as well as "God-fearing Greeks" and a number of the leading women believed the message. The "God-fearing Greek" refers to those who, while not completing the proselytization process, attended the synagogue and listened to the reading of the Scriptures. Nothing is said about the character of the dialogues outside Paul's reliance upon the Scriptures as his source of teaching. We are told, however, that as soon as people began to follow Paul's teachings, the Jews became jealous. We are not told that they were able to refute Paul, or anything else. Instead, jealousy was their motive. While they had not been able to get God-fearers to convert, Paul succeeded in convincing them of the truths of the gospel and eliciting from them their belief and obedience.

What follows is not overly relevant to our inquiry here, aside from the fact that an uproar ensues, and Paul and Silas are forced out of town, leading them to Berea. In contrast with the jealous Jews who stirred up trouble, Luke tells us that those in Berea were more "noble-minded." Rather than stirring up trouble, they eagerly listened to the message of Paul and Silas. At this point, however, we need to look closely at the text. The term "noble minded" is *eugene,steroi*, which is the adjectival comparative form. Luke is making a contrast between the *attitude* of the Thessalonians and that of the Bereans. As F.F. Bruce points out in his commentary on Acts, the term originally referred to nobility, but eventually came to mean "open minded." How did they show their open-mindedness? They did so by eagerly receiving the message of the Apostles, daily examining the Scriptures to see if what they were receiving was in accordance with God's truth. The Greek text indicates that these were not two different activities: the receiving of the message and the searching of the Scriptures on a daily basis are *one action* in Luke's description. The "daily examining the Scriptures" is a description of the *means* by which the Bereans received the word of the Apostles. A.T. Robertson points out that the term "searching" as in "searching the Scriptures" (*avnakri,nontej*) means "to sift up and down, make careful and exact research as in the processes as in Ac 4:9; 12:19, etc.).

Now, the reason this passage is relevant is quite clear: here you have individuals comparing the Apostolic message against the Scriptures. What is the ultimate source of authority for the Bereans? Plainly, it is the Scripture. And just as obviously, the Apostles have no problem at all with this procedure. Hence the necessity of addressing this passage on the part of Mr. Ray.

Getting Around Acts 17:11

So how does Mr. Ray get around this passage? He begins by asserting that the Bereans actually *condemn* the position of *sola scriptura*! How? Let's see. He begins by stating, upon citing Acts 17:11-12, "The Thessalonians rejected Paul and his message, and, after denouncing him, they became jealous of others believed." Yet, where does the text say this? The text says nothing about rejecting Paul's message. Luke says, "But the Jews, becoming jealous and taking along some wicked men from the market place, formed a mob and set the city in an uproar." The motivation of the Jew's action is plain: jealousy, nothing more. Of course they did not embrace the message: if they had, they would not have been jealous! Why make a point of this? Note Mr. Ray's own words:

Why? "For three weeks he [Paul] reasoned with them from the Scriptures in the synagogue, as was custom." They did not revile Paul the first week or the second; rather, they listened and discussed. Eventually they rejected what he had to say. They compared Paul's message to the Old Testament and decided that Paul was wrong.

Where does Luke speak of their comparing Paul's message with the Old Testament and concluding it was wrong? Luke gives only one reason for their rejection: jealousy. This was nothing new. This is not the first time Paul encountered the jealousy of the Jews. I certainly don't get the idea that Paul was defeated in public debate on the issue of the witness of the Old Testament to the Messiah, Jesus Christ. Why is Mr. Ray intent upon reading into the action of the Thessalonians this idea of comparing the message of Paul to the Scriptures and finding it wanting? Because it is his position that the *Thessalonians* were actually believers in *sola scriptura*, while the Bereans were not! How does he come to this tremendously surprising conclusion? First, he attempts to draw a distinction between the Thessalonians and the Bereans as to their *make-up*:

When Protestants use this passage as a proof text for the doctrine of *sola scriptura*, they should realize that those in question were not Christians; they were Hellenistic Jews. There was no doctrine of *sola scriptura* within Jewish communities, but the Scriptures were held as sacred.

Everyone realizes that the Bereans were not Christians when Paul and Silas first arrived. Then again, neither were the Thessalonians. In fact, the make-up of the two communities was the same: Hellenistic Jews, with God-fearers also in the congregation in the synagogue. There is no meaningful difference

the ethnic make up of the synagogue in Thessalonica and the one in Berea. If there was no doctrine *sola scriptura* in Berea, nor was there one in Thessalonica. He must be consistent in using the same standards for both, for he certainly makes no attempt at substantiating his implicit assertion that there was some difference between the two groups.

Now, Mr. Ray goes on to expand upon his claim about the Jews:

Although the Jews are frequently referred to as "the people of the book," in reality they had a strong tradition that accompanied their Scriptures, along with an authoritative teaching authority, as represented by the "seat of Moses" in the synagogues (Matt. 23:2). The Jews had no reason to accept Paul's teaching as "divinely inspired," since they had just met him. When new teachings sprang up that claimed to be a development of Judaism, the rabbis researched to see if they could be verified from the Torah.

Mr. Ray's understanding of Matthew 23 goes far beyond anything that particular passage can substantiate. The seat of Moses was simply the seat upon which a person sat to read the Scriptures in the synagogue. But he is right that the Jews had a great body of tradition: and the Lord Jesus taught to subjugate those traditions to the Scriptures in Matthew 15:1-9, including those that the Jews themselves claimed were "divine" in origin. Which is exactly why the Bereans are commended: they were doing what they *should* have done when faced with a new message. They are testing that message for consistency against the ultimate rule of faith for God's people: the Scriptures. At this point, however, Ray utterly departs from the text and says:

If one of the two groups could be tagged as believers in *sola scriptura*, who would it be, the Thessalonians or the Bereans? The Thessalonians, obviously. They, like the Bereans, examined the Scriptures with Paul in the synagogue, yet they rejected his teaching. They rejected the new teaching, deciding after three weeks of deliberation that Paul's word contradicted the Torah. Their decision was completely unjustified from their scriptural perspective. How could the Messiah of God be cursed by hanging on a tree like a common criminal, publicly displayed as one who bore the judgment of God? What kind of king and Messiah would that be? This seemed irreconcilable to them (see Simon J. Kistemaker, *Acts* [Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 1990], 614).

One's breath is taken away by the tremendous leap taken here. Where does Luke say a *word* about Thessalonian Jews carefully examining Paul's teaching on the basis of *sola scriptura* and, as a result, rejecting it? Of course, he says nothing of the sort. Instead, he says that Paul operated on the basis of the supremacy of Scripture in preaching to the Thessalonians, and as a result, he was successful in convincing some of the truthfulness of his message. But others, *acting out of jealousy*, started a riot. Nothing is said at *all* about their taking three weeks to deliberate and come to some kind of scriptural conclusion! This is purely wishful thinking on Mr. Ray's part. Sadly, he then attempts to provide some kind of basis for this tremendous leap by citing Kistemaker's work on Acts. Yet, if one reads the source cited, one finds the exact opposite of Ray's own assertions:

Paul follows the example set by Jesus, who opened the Scriptures for the two men on the way to Emmaus and for the disciples in the upper room. Jesus showed them from the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms that the Christ had to suffer and rise from the dead (Luke 24:25-27, 44-46). The term *exp1aining* comes from the Greek verb meaning "to open." Paul opens the Word and sets the explanation of the messianic prophecies before his listeners. By appealing to the Scriptures, he has a common basis to prove that the Messiah has come in the person and work of Jesus Christ of Nazareth.

Paul demonstrates that the Christ *had* to suffer, die, and rise from the grave. Luke, in his Gospel and Acts, also clearly illustrates that Jesus' life, death, and resurrection are governed by divine necessity (refer, e.g., to Luke 2:49; 4:43; 13:33; 24:26; Acts 3:21). "It is Luke's underlying concern not to depict Jesus' death as the tragic failure of a prophet but to present the death and resurrection of Jesus as necessary saving acts of God."

In his presentations, Paul discusses three facts: the Christ had to suffer, he had to rise from the dead, and he is Jesus proclaimed by Paul. The Jews objected to the teaching that Christ died on a cross, because to them a criminal hanging on a tree (cross) was under God's curse (Deut. 21:23; Gal. 3:13). The doctrine of the resurrection is the recurring theme the apostles proclaim wherever they speak (1 Cor. 15:20-24; 32; 13:30, 33, 34, 17:31). And identifying Jesus with the Messiah is Paul's personal objective ever since his conversion on the Damascus road (refer to 9:22). (Kistemaker, pp. 613-614).

There is certainly nothing supportive of Mr. Ray's thesis in these words from Kistemaker. In fact, just the opposite is true. Kistemaker is not even here speaking specifically of the Thessalonian Jews, but of the Jews Paul encountered in his ministry in general. The reason Mr. Ray does not provide a reference to a commentary speaking of the Thessalonians coming to a reasoned, considered conclusion on the basis of an examination of the Scripture is simply this: the text doesn't even hint at such an idea. Yet, despite this, Mr. Ray says,

We can see, then, that if anyone could be classified as adherents to *sola scriptura* it was the Thessalonian Jews. They reasoned from the Scriptures alone and concluded that Paul's new teaching was "unbiblical."

It is simply amazing that a person can go from the jealousy of the Jews to the idea that they were correct. Protestants practicing *sola scriptura* and therefore missing the truth of Paul's message! We are given no references to scholarly sources here, either, for the same reason: such a conclusion has no connection with the text.

But remember that Mr. Ray says the *Bereans* actually *denied sola scriptura*. How is this? Let's listen to

The Bereans, on the other hand, were not adherents of *sola scriptura*, for they were willing to accept Paul's new oral teaching as the word of God (as Paul claimed his oral teaching was; see 1 Thess. 2:13). The Bereans, before accepting the oral word of God from Paul, a tradition as even Paul himself referred to it (see 2 Thess. 2:15), examined the Scriptures to see if these things were so. They were noble-minded precisely because they "received the word with all eagerness." Were the Bereans commended primarily for searching the Scriptures? No. Their open-minded willingness to listen was the *primary* reason they are referred to as noble-minded-not that they searched the Scriptures. A perusal of grammars and commentaries makes it clear that they were "noble-minded" not for studying Scripture, but for treating Paul more civilly than did the Thessalonians with an open mind and generous courtesy (see I. Howard Marshall, "The Acts of the Apostles" in the *Tyndale New Testament Commentaries* [Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1981], 5:280).

Does a "perusal" of grammars and commentaries give us such an indication? Let's start with one that Mr. Ray has already cited, that being the commentary of Kistemaker:

Noble-mindedness. Luke compares the worshipers at the Berean synagogue with those at Thessalonica and praises the Bereans. Paul develops a close and loving relationship with the Thessalonians (see 1 Thess. 2:11); nevertheless, in respect to noble-mindedness the Bereans excel. They are more open to the truth of God's Word than the people of Thessalonica are.

The reason for the openness of the Bereans lies in their receptivity to and love for God's Word. For them the Scriptures are much more than a written scroll or book that conveys a divine message. They use the Old Testament as the touchstone of truth, so that when Paul proclaims the gospel they immediately turn to God's written Word for verification. They do so, Luke adds, with great eagerness. Note well, the adjective *great* indicates that they treasure the Word of God. Luke ascribes the same diligence to the Bereans as Peter does to the Old Testament prophets, who intently and diligently searched the Word and inquired into its meaning (1 Peter 1:10). The Bereans open the Scriptures and with ready minds learn that Jesus has fulfilled the messianic prophecies.

Day by day, the Bereans examine the Scriptures to see whether the teachings of Paul and Silas accord with God's written Word. They do so not from unbelief and doubt but from honest analysis and eagerness to learn the message of God's revelation. Although Luke fails to mention that God opened the hearts of the Bereans (compare 16:14), in verse 12 he records that "many of the Jews" believe the gospel. These people believe because they know God's Word. The situation in Berea differs from that in Thessalonica where "some of the Jews were persuaded" (v.4).

How about Richard Longenecker in the *Expositor's Bible Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1971), p. 471?

Luke gave the Jews at Berea undying fame by characterizing them as being "more noble" (*eugenes*) than the Thessalonian Jews because they tested the truth of Paul's message by the touchstone of Scripture rather than judging it by political and cultural considerations. So they examined the Scriptures daily (*kath hemeran*) to see whether what Paul proclaimed was really true, and many believed.

And we note the words of Ivor Powell in *The Amazing Acts* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1981), pp. 295-296:

When the same speaker ministered in the next synagogue, the listeners were not swept off their feet by eloquent oratory; they searched the Scriptures "ever day to see if what Paul said was true." (*The New International Version*). Apparently, they had more faith in the Word of God than in the man who expounded it. When Paul cited certain prophetic utterances, the listeners unrolled their scrolls to see if the prophets had indeed made such predictions. Luke said the people in Berea were "more noble" than the Jews in Thessalonica, and that probably meant they were more educated. Farrar said, "Instead of angrily rejecting this new Gospel, they daily and diligently searched the Scriptures to judge Paul's arguments and references by the word and the testimony—they were more generous, more simple, sincere and truth-loving."

And what of the very commentary Mr. Ray cites, that of I. Howard Marshall? On page 280 we read:

The account of Paul's reception at Berea is the classical description of a more well-disposed and open-minded (RSV *more noble*) response by the Jews to the gospel. They were zealous to hear what Paul had to say, and so they met with him *daily* (and not merely on the sabbath). Nor did they accept what he said thoughtlessly and uncritically, but they themselves examined the Scriptures to see whether the case which Paul developed from them (as in 17:2ff) was sound. Here was no mere emotional response to the gospel, but one based on intellectual conviction.

And A.T. Robertson commented:

Examining the Scriptures daily (kaqV h`meran anakrinontej taj grafaj). Paul expounded the Scriptures daily as in Thessalonica, but the Bereans, instead of resenting his new interpretation, examined (anakrinw means to sift up and down, make careful and exact research as in legal processes as in Acts 4:9; 12:19, etc.) the Scriptures for themselves. In Scotland people have the Bible open on the preacher as he expounds the passage, a fine habit worth imitating. Whether these things were so (ei eoi tauri o`utwj). Literally, "if these things had it thus." The present optative in the indirect question represents original present indicative as in Lu 1:29 (Robertson, *Grammar*, pp. 1043f.). This use of ei with the optative may be looked at as the condition of the fourth class (undetermined with less likelihood of determination) as in Ac 17:27; 20:16; 24:19; 27:12 (Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 1021). The Bereans were eagerly interested in the new message of Paul and Silas but they wanted to see it for themselves. What a noble attitude. Paul's preaching made Bible students of them. The duty of private interpretation is thus made plain (Hovey).

Why do all these commentators say the same thing? Because the text is plain beyond dispute, and Mr. Ray is simply desperate to avoid the plain meaning of the text. This error is then compounded by his

errant belief that *sola scriptura* is somehow contradicted by the acceptance of "new revelation," as if *scriptura* is meant to be applied during times of revelation rather than being a normative rule for the Church. He writes,

The Bereans searched the Torah no less than the Thessalonians, yet they were eager to accept word from God from the mouth of Paul, *in addition to* what they already held to be Scripture, that is, the Law and the Prophets. Even if one claims that Paul preached the gospel and not a "tradition," it is clear that the Bereans were accepting new *revelation* that was not contained in their Scriptures. These Bereans accepted oral teaching, the tradition of the apostles, as equal to Scripture, in addition to, and as an "extension" of, the Torah. This is further illustrated by the Christian community's reception of Paul's epistles as divinely inspired Scripture (see 2 Peter 3:16; here Peter seems to acknowledge Paul's writings as equal to the "other Scriptures," which can be presumed to refer to the Old Testament).

In reality, the Bereans accepted the message of Christ because it was consistent with the Old Testament revelation. Even introducing "canon" issues here is to continue the tremendous misuse of this passage already begun in attempting to turn the Thessalonians into crypto-Protestants and the Bereans into crypto-Catholics. And we note in passing (as Wayne Grudem notes in his *Systematic Theology*, pp. 85) that 2 Peter 3:16 refers to *writings*, not to vague and undefinable "oral traditions."

From the perspective of anti-Catholics, the *Thessalonians* would have been more noble-minded, for they loyally stuck to their canon of Scripture *alone* and rejected any additional binding authority (spoken or written) from the mouth of an apostle. In fact, at the Council of Jamnia, around A.D. 90, the Jews determined that anything written after Ezra was not infallible Scripture; they specifically mentioned the Gospels of Christ in order to reject them.

Mr. Ray would do well to deal with the criticism of Jamnia found in Beckwith's fine work, *The Old Testament Canon of the New Testament Church* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985). But in any case, he has here yet another straw-man, an argument based upon either misrepresentation or ignorance of the issues at hand. The Thessalonians were not noble minded because they rejected the message preached *out of jealousy*. The Bereans were noble minded because they listened to the message and tested it against Scripture. Any attempt to read into the passage some concept of "extra-biblical oral tradition" or to read *out* of the passage the plain supremacy of Scripture, is yet another example of how Roman Catholic apologists are at a real loss when it comes to engaging in serious exegesis of the Scriptures.

But in the midst of this misrepresentation, Mr. Ray stumbles upon a truth without, seemingly, knowing it. Sensing that he has done nothing to escape the simple fact that the Bereans *tested* the claimed apostolic message for consistency *by Scripture* and *without an infallible magisterium*, he attempts to explain their action:

Why did the Bereans search the Scriptures? Because they were the *sole* source of revelation and authority? No, but to see if Paul was in line with what they already knew-to *confirm additional revelation*. They would not submit blindly to his apostolic teaching and oral tradition, but, once they accepted the credibility of Paul's teaching as the oral word of God, they put it on a par with Scripture and recognized its binding authority.

Note the phrase, "to confirm additional revelation." Here you have individuals going *directly* to Scripture and *testing* a message for consistency. Yet, when I do the *very same thing* with Roman theology, I'm engaging in "private interpretation" and that I am endangering my soul. For all his attempts, Mr. Ray has utterly failed to overthrow the plain teaching of the passage: the Bereans did not seek for some "tradition" nor an "infallible magisterium." They allowed the Scriptures to function *just as the Baptist Confession of Faith says they should*. Mr. Ray won't admit it, but one thing is plain as day: the Bereans did not believe in *sola ecclesia* as he does: they did not look for an infallible Church with an infallible magisterium to tell them what was, and what was not, Scripture and truth. [Indeed, we note with some

level of irony that from the Roman Catholic position, an infallible definition of the canon was still 150 years in the future!]

Finally, Mr. Ray follows the old line of misusing 2 Thessalonians 2:15:

After that, like the converts who believed in Thessalonica, they espoused apostolic Tradition and the Testament equally as God's word (see 2 Thess. 2:15, 3:16).

Paul nowhere speaks of "apostolic Tradition" in his writings. In 2 Thessalonians 2:15 Paul speaks of preaching the gospel to the Thessalonians orally and by letter, nothing more. It is a tremendous stretch to assert that we have here a basis for some nebulous, ever-changing "oral tradition" that eventually gives the basis for such doctrines as papal infallibility and the Bodily Assumption of Mary.

In Conclusion

After a decade of trying, I still await a *serious* interaction in writing from a Roman Catholic apologist of the doctrine of *sola scriptura* that does not engage in the most egregious forms of misrepresentation and argument-begging. After a while, one begins to wonder why it is that the doctrine cannot be discussed openly and honestly. Why do we continuously have to point out basic error after basic error as we have done above? If Rome's claims are so strong and so overwhelming (certainly a claim Rome's defenders make all the time), why the constant misrepresentation? If we had to continuously misrepresent Rome's doctrines, would we not, by so doing, be demonstrating that we do not have solid answers to her claims?

I do hope that Mr. Ray has misrepresented his former faith purely out of ignorance, not out of malice. And if that is the case, and I truly hope it is, I hope he will reconsider his pledge of allegiance to an authoritarian system that has led him so far from the truths of the Scriptures.



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How Many Books Are In The Old Testament? How Can One Know For Sure? (Popes and Councils Proved To Be In Error)

Examine the Old Testament listing of books in a Catholic, and a Protestant Bible, and you will normally find a discrepancy. You will find several more books in the Catholic Old Testament than in the Protestant Bible, the Protestant counting 39 and the Catholic counting some 46 or 47 books. The extra books in the Catholic Bible are referred to as the Apocryphal, or Deuterocanonical books, by Protestants and Catholic respectively. Apocrypha means "hidden", and Deuterocanonical means "second canon". This raises the obvious question, who has the correct list of books in their Old Testaments, the Protestant or the Catholic? (The New Testament is identical in the Protestant and Catholic Bibles.) For the disputed Old Testament there need not be any doubt as to who's list of books is correct, Catholic or Protestant, because the New

Testament actually tells us not once, not twice, but *three* times. But first, let's begin with the following passage:

Rom 3:1 What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision?

Rom 3:2 Much every way: chiefly, because that **unto them were committed the oracles of God.**

Now in the Roman Catholic Douay Rheims translation that reads:

Rom 3:1 What advantage then hath the Jew, or what is the profit of circumcision?

Rom 3:2 Much in every way. First indeed, because the words of God were committed to them.

So the word of God was committed originally to the Jews. As the designated custodians of the inspired word of God, they knew which books were canonical, and which were not, and they knew this *without* the assistance of the yet to appear Catholic Church.

Now, on to our quotes defining the Old Testament canon.

Christ Declares The Hebrew Canon The Word of God.

Luke 24:44 And he said unto them, **These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me.**

Luke 24:45 Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures,

Here in the above verse, Jesus divides the written word of God into three categories. The Hebrew Bible, known by the acronym **TaNaKh**, has these three divisions, first the **Torah**, the first five books of Moses, second the **Nevi'im** or Prophets, and third the **Ketuvim** or Writings. Christ was appearing to the disciples shortly after His resurrection and He was expounding to His disciples on the testimony of the scriptures about Himself, from one end of the Bible to the other. From the beginning at Moses; next to the prophets; and then on to the last division that began with Psalms; Christ explained from the Hebrew Bible, the TaNaKh, how it revealed Him to be the Messiah.

Next, note this passage in which Jesus is chastising the scribes and Pharisees:

Mat 23:29 **Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous,**

Mat 23:30 **And say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.**

Mat 23:31 **Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets.**

Mat 23:32 **Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers.**

Mat 23:33 **Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?**

Mat 23:34 **Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and**

persecute them from city to city:

Mat 23:35 **That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias** son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar.

Mat 23:36 **Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation.**

Here the scribes and Pharisees are boldly proclaiming that had they lived in the times of their forefathers, they would *not* have stoned the prophets of God, that they would have known better. But Jesus says they have persecuted men of God just as their fathers had, and that they would *continue* to do so (v. 34). Then note what is said in the next verse "**... from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias**"... . What could Jesus be referring to? Well, Abel was murdered in the book of Genesis, the first book of the Bible. And Zacharias? What book is his murder related in? Well let's look at our third text, a parallel passage, first:

Luke 11:51 **From the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, which perished between the altar and the temple: verily I say unto you, It shall be required of this generation.**

Luke 11:52 **Woe unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge: ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered.**

Note that Jesus accuses the scribes and Pharisees of taking away the key of knowledge. What key is that? And what is God requiring of that generation? The answer is in the phrase "**From the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias ...**". Well, again, Abel was slain in the *first* book of the Bible (Gen 4:8). Now those Protestants who anticipate the answer might begin looking for the murder of Zacharias in the book of Malachi. Why? Because Jesus is again referring to the full breadth of the scriptures (the key of knowledge, the oracles of God), from the first book of the Old Testament, to the last book of the Old Testament. A Protestant therefore, might well open their Bible to search in the last book of the Old Testament, Malachi, for the martyrdom of Zacharias. *However, Malachi is not the last book of the Hebrew TaNaKh!* What? That is correct. The Hebrew Bible, though identical in content to the Protestant Old Testament, is *not* in the same order as Protestant *or* Catholic Bibles. In the Hebrew Bible the last book is the book of *Chronicles*. That is where we find the murder of Zechariah between the altar and the temple:

2 Chr 24:20 And the Spirit of God came upon **Zechariah** the son of Jehoiada* the priest, which stood above the people, and said unto them, Thus saith God, Why transgress ye the commandments of the LORD, that ye cannot prosper? because ye have forsaken the LORD, he hath also forsaken you.

2 Chr 24:21 And they conspired against him, and **stoned him with stones at the commandment of the king in the court of the house of the LORD.**

2 Chr 24:22 Thus Joash the king remembered not the kindness which Jehoiada his father had done to him, but slew his son. And when he died, he said, The LORD look upon it, and require it.

It is worth noting that while Abel was the first martyr, Zechariah is *not* the last in the Old Testament, chronologically speaking. That was the prophet Urijah, killed by king Jehoiakim in Jeremiah 26:20-23, more than a century after the martyrdom of Zechariah:

- King Joash, who had Zechariah stoned within the temple's court (2 Chr 24:20-22), was the 13th king of the northern kingdom of Israel, and he ruled from 798-782 B.C.
- King Jehoiakim, who slew Urijah with a sword (Jer 26:20-23), was the 18th ruler of the southern kingdom of Judah, and he reigned from 609-598 B.C.

Had Jesus been speaking chronologically, (from the first martyr to the last) He would have said - from the blood of Able *unto the blood of Urijah*, but that is not what He intended. He was clearly saying from the first book of scripture, *to the last book of scripture*. Therefore, in Matthew 23:35 and Luke 11:51, and in Luke 24:44, Jesus was explicitly referring to the order and divisions of the books in the Hebrew Bible as the complete span of scripture.

The following table shows the collective logical result of the quotes of Jesus. Note particularly that the third division of scripture is defined as beginning at Psalms and ending with 2 Chronicles.

TaNaKh (Hebrew Bible As Delineated By Christ)		
The Law	The Prophets	The Writings
Genesis - Deuteronomy	Joshua - Malachi	Psalms - 2 Chronicles

Already in apostolic times, long before any Roman Catholic councils, this same Hebrew Bible, the TaNaKh, was being referred to by the Christians as the *Old Testament*.

2 Cor 3:14 But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which veil is done away in Christ.

* **Son of Barachias - Son of Jehoiada:** Some Catholics may object that there is a discrepancy between 2 Chr 24:20 and Matt. 23:35, that they refer to two different people because of the seeming difference in fathers. So why the seeming discrepancy in lineage? The author of the book of Zechariah (about 520 B.C.) was "the son of Berechiah, the [grand]son of Iddo the prophet" (Zec 1:1,7), however, there is no record of his being martyred at the temple. It may be that "son of Barachias" in Matt. 23:35 is the result of a scribal insertion, in a mistaken effort to clarify the text. Because the parallel passages of Luke 11:51 and Matt. 23:35 both state that Zechariah perished between the altar and the temple, it is clearly the same Zechariah mentioned in 2 Chronicles 24:20-21, which is also well documented in other Jewish literature.

The Altered Grouping and Ordering of Books in the Greek Septuagint

The Alexandrian canon

The Old Testament as it has come down in Greek translation from the Jews of Alexandria via the Christian Church differs in many respects from the Hebrew Scriptures. The books of the second and third divisions have been redistributed and arranged according to categories of literature -- history, poetry, wisdom, and prophecy.

Source: Encyclopedia Britannica Online.

B. THE CANON AMONG THE ALEXANDRIAN JEWS (DEUTEROCANONICAL BOOKS)

It is a significant fact that in all these Alexandrian Bibles the traditional Hebrew order is broken up by the interspersing of the additional literature among the other books, outside the law, thus [in the opinion of the Catholic writer] asserting for the extra writings a substantial equality of rank and privilege.

● [Canon of the Old Testament](#) entry, Catholic Encyclopedia Online.

It is this striking change in grouping and sequencing of books in the Greek Septuagint that so eloquently testifies to the fact that in the above quotes from Jesus Christ, He was referring *not* to the Septuagint, which included apocryphal books not found in the Hebrew canon, but to the original TaNaKh, the Hebrew Bible, which *excludes* the apocryphal books. Yet, Catholic Tradition largely accepted the books of the Greek Septuagint as the canon of the Old Testament. Note below the significant variations in content and ordering of books in the oldest existing copies of the Septuagint, and that no two are exactly alike.

The Greek Septuagint Old Testament		
Codex Vaticanus Forgery found in 1481 in Vatican Library	Codex Sinaiticus 1836 Forgery by Constantine Simonides	Codex Alexandrinus Unknown prior to 1624
Pentateuch	Pentateuch	Pentateuch
1. Genesis	1. Genesis (fragments)	1. Genesis
2. Exodus	2. Exodus (missing)	2. Exodus
3. Leviticus	3. Leviticus (missing)	3. Leviticus
4. Numbers	4. Numbers (fragments)	4. Numbers
5. Deuteronomy	5. Deuteronomy (missing)	5. Deuteronomy

Historical Books	Historical Books	Historical Books
6. Joshua	6. Joshua (missing)	6. Joshua
7. Judges	7. Judges (missing)	7. Judges
8. Ruth	8. Ruth (missing)	8. Ruth
9. 1 Kings - (1 Samuel)	9. 1 Kings - (1 Samuel) (missing)	9. 1 Kings - (1 Samuel)
10. 2 Kings - (2 Samuel)	10. 2 Kings - (2 Samuel) (missing)	10. 2 Kings - (2 Samuel)
11. 3 Kings - (1 Kings)	11. 3 Kings - (1 Kings) (missing)	11. 3 Kings - (1 Kings)
12. 4 Kings - (2 Kings)	12. 4 Kings - (2 Kings) (missing)	12. 4 Kings - (2 Kings)
13. 1 Paralipomenon - (1 Chronicles)	13. 1 Paralipomenon - (1 Chronicles 9:27-19:17)	13. 1 Paralipomenon - (1 Chronicles)
14. 2 Paralipomenon - (2 Chronicles)	14. 2 Paralipomenon - (2 Chronicles) (missing)	14. 2 Paralipomenon - (2 Chronicles)
15. 1 Esdras***	15. 1 Esdras*** (missing)	Prophetic Books
16. 2 Esdras - (Ezra-Nehemiah)	16. 2 Esdras - (Ezra-Nehemiah)	15. Hosea
Poetical Books	17. Esther - Chapter 10 beginning at verse 4, thru Chapter 16.	16. Amos
17. Psalms (with Psalm 151)*	18. Tobias (Tobit)	17. Micah
18. Proverbs	19. Judith	18. Joel
19. Ecclesiastes	20. 1 Machabees	19. Obadiah
20. Song of Songs	21. 4 Machabees*	20. Jonah
21. Job	Prophetic Books	21. Nahum
22. Wisdom (of Solomon)	23. Isaiah	22. Habakkuk
23. Ecclesiasticus (Wisdom of Jesus the Son of Sirach)	24. Jeremiah	23. Zephaniah
Historical Books	25. Lamentations	24. Haggai
24. Esther - Chapter 10 beginning at verse 4, thru Chapter 16.	26. Ezekiel (missing)	25. Zechariah
25. Tobit	27. Daniel (missing)	26. Malachi
26. Judith	28. Hosea (missing)	27. Isaiah
Prophetic Books	29. Amos (missing)	28. Jeremiah
27. Hosea	30. Micah (missing)	29. Baruch
28. Amos	31. Joel	30. Lamentations
29. Micah	32. Obadiah	31. Epistle of Jeremiah
30. Joel	33. Jonah	32. Ezekiel
31. Obadiah	34. Nahum	Historical Books
32. Jonah	35. Habakkuk	34. Esther - Chapter 10 beginning at verse 4, thru Chapter 16.
33. Nahum	36. Zephaniah	35. Tobit
34. Habakkuk	37. Haggai	36. Judith
	38. Zechariah	

35. Zephaniah	39. Malachi	37. 1 Esdras***
36. Haggai	Poetical Books	38. 2 Esdras (Ezra-Nehemiah)
37. Zechariah	40. Psalms (with Psalm 151)*	39. 1 Machabees
38. Malachi	41. Proverbs	40. 2 Machabees
39. Isaiah	42. Ecclesiastes	41. 3 Machabees*
40. Jeremiah	43. Song of Songs	42. 4 Machabees*
41. Baruch	44. Wisdom (of Solomon)	Poetical Books
42. Lamentations	45. Ecclesiasticus (Wisdom of Jesus the Son of Sirach)	43. Psalms (with Psalm 151)*
43. Epistle of Jeremiah	46. Job	44. Job
44. Ezekiel	Note: Baruch omitted	45. Proverbs
45. Daniel - Chapter 3, verses 24-91, Chapters 13+14		46. Ecclesiastes
Note: 1 and 2 Machabees are omitted		47. Song of Songs
		48. Wisdom (of Solomon)
		49. Ecclesiasticus (Wisdom of Jesus the Son of Sirach)
		50. Psalms of Solomon**
<p>* Orthodox Catholics only ** Pseudepigrapha *** Not considered Canonical by Roman Catholics</p>		

While many have previously believed that Christ and the Apostles used the Greek Septuagint because it was the common tongue of the day, the recent discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls at Qumran proves conclusively that the Old Testament *was* available in Hebrew in Israel at the time of Christ. Note the following verse:

Matt. 5:18 For amen I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot, or one tittle shall not pass of the law, till all be fulfilled.

A Catholic Bible commentary says the following about the above verse:

jot or tittle: "Jot" refers to yôd, the smallest letter of the Hebrew alphabet; "tittle" is a slight serif on a Hebrew letter that distinguishes it from another, similarly formed letter.

Source: *The New Jerome Bible Commentary*, copyright 1990, 1968, by Prentice Hall, Inc., ISBN 0-13-614934-0, page 641.

So it would seem, based on the above Catholic commentary, that Catholics do, in fact, accept that Christ was referring to scripture in the *Hebrew* language, and NOT a Greek translation!

The Greek Septuagint ([Codex Vaticanus](#), [Sinaiticus](#) and [Alexandrinus](#)) were unknown prior to the printing of the 1611 King James Bible, and are all dubious in origin.

● [What is the LXX?](#)

No Jewish source versions of the Septuagint are known to exist today, fueling speculation that the apocryphal books may never have been a part of the original Jewish produced Greek manuscript, but were only included in subsequent Christian copies. The caves of Qumran, in which were found all of the canonical books of the Old Testament except Esther, also contained fragments of chapter 6 of the apocryphal Ecclesiasticus [Wisdom of Jesus the Son of (Ben) Sirach] in Hebrew, found in [Cave 2](#), a fragment of Tobit in Aramaic, found in [Cave 4](#), and a fragment of the Epistle of Jeremiah (Baruch Chapter 6) in [cave 7](#).

See ● [Inventory of the Qumran manuscripts](#).

Previous to the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, the two oldest known complete Hebrew (Masoretic) texts of the Bible were the [Aleppo Codex](#) dated to the 10th century A.D. and the [Leningrad Codex](#), dated to the early 11th century A.D. Both these texts, attributed to Ben-Asher, placed Chronicles at the *beginning* of the 3rd division, the Ketuvim (Writings). However, modern reprints of the Leningrad Codex have moved the book of Chronicles back to its tradition place at the end of the Ketuvim.

See ● [Biblia Hebraica Leningradensia](#)

The King James Old Testament was translated from a Hebrew Bible printed in Venice in 1524-25 by Daniel Bomberg. Known as the Second Rabbinic Bible, it was edited by Ben Chayyim (or Ben Hayyim), and was compiled from many collected Hebrew texts. Considered the standard Masoretic text for the next 400 years (well into the 20th Century), it placed Chronicles at the *end* of the Ketuvim.

Below is a comparative table of the Old Testament canon of the Hebrew, Protestant and Catholic Bibles. Note that while the Hebrew Canon counts 24 books, and the Protestant Old Testament counts 39 books, they are identical in actual content, the difference for the count being the grouping of certain books into one scroll in the Hebrew canon. Also note the change in arrangement and sequence of books between the Hebrew and Christian Old Testaments.

The Hebrew Canon (TaNaKh) 24 books	Protestant Old Testament 39 books	Latin Vulgate and Catholic Old Testament 46 books
Torah (Law)	Pentateuch	Pentateuch
1. Genesis	1. Genesis	1. Genesis
2. Exodus	2. Exodus	2. Exodus
3. Leviticus	3. Leviticus	3. Leviticus
4. Numbers	4. Numbers	4. Numbers
5. Deuteronomy	5. Deuteronomy	5. Deuteronomy
Nevi'im (Prophets)	Historical Books	Historical Books
6. Joshua	6. Joshua	6. Joshua
7. Judges	7. Judges	7. Judges

8. Samuel (1st + 2nd)	8. Ruth	8. Ruth
9. Kings (1st + 2nd)	9. 1 Samuel	9. 1 Kings - (1 Samuel)
10. Isaiah	10. 2 Samuel	10. 2 Kings - (2 Samuel)
11. Jeremiah	11. 1 Kings	11. 3 Kings - (1 Kings)
12. Ezekiel	12. 2 Kings	12. 4 Kings - (2 Kings)
13. The 12 Minor Prophets	13. 1 Chronicles	13. 1 Paralipomenon - (1 Chronicles)
Hosea	14. 2 Chronicles	14. 2 Paralipomenon - (2 Chronicles)
Joel	15. Ezra	15. 1 Esdras* - (Ezra)
Amos	16. Nehemiah	16. 2 Esdras* - (Nehemiah)
Obadiah	17. Esther	17. Tobias (Tobit)
Jonah	Poetical Books	18. Judith
Micah	18. Job	19. Esther - Chapter 10 beginning at verse 4, thru Chapter 16.
Nahum	19. Psalms	Poetical Books
Habakkuk	20. Proverbs	20. Job
Zephaniah	21. Ecclesiastes	21. Psalms
Haggai	22. Song of Solomon	22. Proverbs
Zechariah	Prophetical Books	23. Ecclesiastes
Malachi	23. Isaiah	24. Canticle of Canticles
Ketuvim - Writings (Hagiographa)	24. Jeremiah	Wisdom Books
14. Psalms	25. Lamentations	25. Wisdom (of Solomon)
15. Proverbs	26. Ezekiel	26. Ecclesiasticus (Wisdom of Jesus the Son of Sirach)
16. Job	27. Daniel	Prophetical Books
17. Song of Songs	28. Hosea	27. Isaiah
18. Ruth	29. Joel	28. Jeremiah
19. Lamentations	30. Amos	29. Lamentations
20. Ecclesiastes	31. Obadiah	30. Baruch (Letter of Jeremiah = Baruch ch. 6)
21. Esther	32. Jonah	31. Ezechiel
22. Daniel	33. Micah	32. Daniel - Chapter 3, verses 24-91, Chapters 13+14
23. Ezra + Nehemiah	34. Nahum	33. Osee - (Hosea)
24. Chronicles (1st + 2nd)	35. Habakkuk	34. Joel
	36. Zephaniah	35. Amos
	37. Haggai	36. Abdias - (Obadiah)
	38. Zechariah	
	39. Malachi	

		37. Jonas
		38. Micheas - (Micah)
		39. Nahum
		40. Habacue
		41. Sophonias- (Zephaniah)
		42. Aggeus - (Haggai)
		43. Zecharias
		44. Malachias
		45. 1 Machabees
		46. 2 Machabees
		Orthodox Catholics also include 3 Maccabees, 4 Maccabees, and Psalm 151.

* The four books called *Esdras*:

RSV, KJV (1611)	Septuagint	Latin Vulgate
Ezra	2 Esdras (Chap. 1-10)	1 Esdras
Nehemiah	2 Esdras (Chap. 11-25)	2 Esdras
1 Esdras	1 Esdras	3 Esdras
2 Esdras		4 Esdras

So the New Testament, recognized unanimously by Catholics and Protestants alike as the inspired word of God, clearly indicates through the words of Jesus Christ that the Hebrew Bible, the TaNaKh, contains all the inspired canonical books of the Old Testament. This excludes as spurious, and non-canonical, the Apocryphal or Deuterocanonical books found in Catholic Bibles, which are colored red in the above tables, and proves that Catholic definitions of the canon by Popes and Councils, to include the "infallible" declaration of Trent, are in error.

Definitions of the Canon of Scripture Frequently Cited By Catholics

- 360 - [Synod of Laodicea \(Canon LX\)](#) [Omits most of the apocrypha]
- 382 - [Synod of Rome \(Pope Damasus / Decretal of Gelasius\)](#), Roman Code lists the canon
- 393 - [Council of Hippo \(Canon XXXVI\)](#)
- 397 to 419 - [First / Second Council of Carthage \(Canon XXIV - Greek xxvii.\)](#)
- 405 - [Canon of Pope Innocent I \(letter to Bishop Exuperius of Toulouse\)](#)
- 787 - [Second Council of Niceae \(ratifies Council of Carthage/African code\)](#)
- 1442 - [Council of Florence \(Session 11\)](#)
- 1545 - [Council of Trent \(first ecumenical council to define the canon\)](#)

The Protestant Bible of 66 books, while it contains the same 39 Old Testament canonical books as the Hebrew TaNaKh, does not retain the original grouping and order cited by Jesus Christ,

rather, it follows the order of the Latin Vulgate used by the Council of Trent in 1546, when it allegedly declared the Roman Catholic Canon infallibly.

● [**The Hebrew Bible \(TaNaKh\) Online**](#)

● The TaNaKh (English Translation) is available at [**Amazon.com**](#)

● [**Council of Trent Decree Concerning the Canonical Scriptures**](#)

● [**The Hebrew Bible**](#) entry of the Catholic Encyclopedia Online.

● [**Canon of the Old Testament**](#) entry of the Catholic Encyclopedia Online.

● [**The Septuagint Version**](#) entry of the Catholic Encyclopedia Online.

[**A Rebuttal to Catholic Apologetics International
on the Old Testament Canon**](#)

[**CAI's Wibisono Hartono Responds**](#)

Revised 7 Sept 2002

[**A Challenge To The Scripture Expert At EWTN's Web Forum
On the Old Testament Canon**](#)

[**A Challenge To The History Expert At EWTN's Web Forum
On the Old Testament Canon \(11-12 Nov 2001\)**](#)

[A screen capture from EWTN's site.](#)



<http://biblelight.net>

A Rebuttal to Catholic Apologetics International
on the Old Testament Canon

Below is an extract of three paragraphs from [Are Deuterocanonical books part of the Bible?](#) by Wibisono Hartono (formerly with [Catholic Apologetics International](#), now with [The Catholic Legate](#)), July 6, 2002, which addresses points made in my essay on the [Hebrew Canon](#).

3. The New Testament refers to Jewish scripture as the Law and the Prophets (Matthew 7:12, 22:40, Luke 16:16, John 1:45, Acts 13:15, Romans 3:21). The Law and the Prophets are the first two division of the Jewish scripture. Does it show that it approves the Jewish scripture? Furthermore in Luke 24:44 Jesus approved the Jewish scripture when He mentioned The Law, the Prophets and Psalms. The phrase "the Law and the Prophets" indicates that the Jewish scripture was still open-ended in Jesus time. Note that both the Septuagint and the Jewish scripture have Law and Prophets. In Luke 24:44 Jesus said that He *fulfilled the prophecies* in the books of Law, the Prophets and Psalms. Psalms is one book of the Writings of the Jewish scripture, which also includes Daniel. Jesus identified Himself to be the Son of Man mentioned in Daniel 7:13, so it is strange that He did not include this book in Luke 24:44. Luke 24:44 may even indicate that Jesus placed Daniel as one book of the Prophets, which means He followed the Septuagint's grouping of books.

4. In Luke 11:50-51 Jesus mentioned the names Abel (Genesis 4:8) and Zechariah who is identified to be the one in 2 Chronicles 24:20-22. Since Genesis and Chronicles are the first and the last book in the present Jewish scripture then the above verses prove that the Old Testament of the Christians is the same with that of the Jews. However there are a number of persons with the name Zechariah in the Bible. Parallel verse in Matthew 23:35 says that Zechariah was the son of *Barachiah* while Zechariah in 2 Chronicles 24:20-22 was the son of *Jehoiada*. More suitable candidate is the prophet Zechariah son of *Berechiah* (Zechariah 1:1). Bear also in mind that in Jesus time there were no books like we have today. All books of the Scripture in that time were written in scrolls, each book in one scroll. Whilst grouping them was possible, they had stack of scrolls, i.e. there was no clear order of the books. Even after Codex (plural Codices) which resembled modern book was later introduced to replace scrolls, the arrangement of the books of the Bible might be different with that of today. Encyclopedia Judaica Volume 4 page 829-830 gives eight different ancient arrangements of the Writings with Chronicles appears as the first or the last book. Leningrad Codex, the standard Masoretic text of the Jewish scripture has Chronicles as the first book of the Writings. Thus Chronicles is not always the last book of the Jewish scripture.

13. We should let the Jews determine the canon of the Old Testament (39 books) because they were entrusted with the oracles of God (Romans 3:8). Catholics do not deny that God spoke in the past through Jewish prophets (Hebrews 1:1) and their words were put in written form by the Jews; that is what Paul meant in Romans 3:8. Bear in mind that deuterocanonical books

were also written by Jews. During Jesus and His apostles' time the canon of the Old Testament was still open-ended. They never gave us the list of inspired books of both the Old and New Testaments. If the Church later through the guidance of the Holy Spirit defined the canon of the New Testament then why she could not define the canon of the Old Testament as well?

Rebuttal to paragraph 3:

The phrase "the Law and the Prophets" indicates that the Jewish scripture was still open-ended in Jesus time.

"The Law and the Prophets and the Psalms"

Luke 24:44 And he said unto them, **These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me.**

Luke 24:45 Then opened he their understanding, **that they might understand the scriptures,**

"The Law and the Prophets"

Mat 7:12 **Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.**

Mat 22:40 **On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.**

Luke 16:16 **The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it.**

John 1:45 Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in **the law, and the prophets,** did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.

Acts 13:15 And after the reading of **the law and the prophets** the rulers of the synagogue sent unto them, saying, Ye men and brethren, if ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on.

Rom 3:21 But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by **the law and the prophets;**

Upon reading the above verses, it is evident that "the law and the prophets" does *not* convey any uncertainty in the canon of scripture at all, rather it is clearly an abbreviated or shorthand way of referring to *the entire span of scripture*. The phrase "the law and the prophets" is not exclusionary or indistinct, rather it includes all of the inspired word of God. There is another similar phrase with *exactly* the same meaning:

"Moses and the Prophets"

Luke 16:29 Abraham saith unto him, They have **Moses and the prophets**; let them hear them.

Luke 16:31 And he said unto him, If they hear not **Moses and the prophets**, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

Luke 24:27 And beginning at **Moses and all the prophets**, he expounded unto them **in all the scriptures** the things concerning himself.

John 1:45 Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom **Moses in the law, and the prophets**, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.

Acts 26:22 Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which **the prophets and Moses** did say should come:

Acts 28:23 And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into his lodging; to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of **the law of Moses, and out of the prophets**, from morning till evening.

Please take special note of Luke 24:27 above. Did the phrase "Moses and all the prophets" exclude any of scripture? No, not when it says that Christ then proceeded to explain from *all the scriptures*. If "Moses and all the prophets" covers all of scripture, then so does "the law and the prophets".

"The Scriptures"

Mat 21:42 Jesus saith unto them, **Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?**

Mat 22:29 Jesus answered and said unto them, **Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.**

Luke 24:32 And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us **the scriptures?**

John 5:39 **Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.**

Acts 17:2 And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of **the scriptures**,

Acts 17:11 These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched **the scriptures** daily, whether those things were so.

Acts 18:24 And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, and mighty in **the scriptures**, came to Ephesus.

Rom 1:1 Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God,

Rom 1:2 (Which he had promised afore by his prophets in **the holy scriptures**.)

2 Tim 3:15 And that from a child thou hast known **the holy scriptures**, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

The use of "the scriptures" in the above verses from the New Testament also indicate that the full extent of scripture was known and understood by *both* the speaker and audience. And the following verse testifies to an already defined and accepted Old Testament canon:

2 Cor 3:14 But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of **the old testament**; which veil is done away in Christ.

So as the above verses indicate, the Old Testament canon of scripture in apostolic times was already fixed, understood and accepted by the Jews, and was *anything but* open-ended, vague, or poorly defined.

Note that both the Septuagint and the Jewish scripture have Law and Prophets.

That statement appears to be intentionally ambiguous and obfuscatory. Let's clarify. Are the same books of the Law and the Prophets of the Hebrew Canon also found in the Septuagint? Yes, they most certainly are. However, the Septuagint *has never had the identical division and grouping of the Hebrew Canon into the Law and Prophets (and Writings)*, which is what the above statement seeks to *conceal* from the reader. See the charts in my essay on the [Hebrew Canon](#). There is simply no way the remarks of Christ can be applied to the Septuagint.

In Luke 24:44 Jesus said that He fulfilled the prophecies in the books of Law, the Prophets and Psalms. Psalms is one book of the Writings of the Jewish scripture, which also includes Daniel. Jesus identified Himself to be the Son of Man mentioned in Daniel 7:13, so it is strange that He did not include this book in Luke 24:44.

Luke 24:44 And he said unto them, **These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me.**

Jesus is referring here to the three divisions of the Hebrew Canon, and by saying "**in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms**" he means *every* book of the Old Testament, *including* Daniel. So it is not at all "strange" that Daniel is not explicitly mentioned in Luke 24:44, because Daniel is obviously included implicitly in context.

Luke 24:44 may even indicate that Jesus placed Daniel as one book of the Prophets, which means He followed the Septuagint's grouping of books.

That assertion is absolutely devoid of any common sense logic at all. There is absolutely nothing in the cited verses that in any way indicate that Christ was endorsing the canon of *any* version of the Septuagint (the three oldest versions of the Septuagint all *differ* in the books they include, and their sequence!), much less indicating the placement of the book of Daniel in the Prophets (rather than the third and last group, the Psalms / Writings). To suggest that Jesus was referring to the Septuagint is to say that black may in fact really be white — it is utter nonsense. See the TaNaKh and Septuagint charts in my essay on the [Hebrew Canon](#).

Rebuttal to paragraph 4:

However there are a number of persons with the name Zechariah in the Bible. Parallel verse in Matthew 23:35 says that Zechariah was the son of Barachiah while Zechariah in 2 Chronicles 24:20-22 was the son of Jehoiada. More suitable candidate is the prophet Zechariah son of Berechiah (Zechariah 1:1).

The writer is totally ignoring the essential characteristic that identifies the Zechariah in question, that he was *martyred in the temple court*:

Luke 11:51 **From the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, which perished between the altar and the temple: verily I say unto you, It shall be required of this generation.**

Luke 11:52 **Woe unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge: ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered.**

Mat 23:35 **That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar.**

There is only *one* Zechariah that scripture tells us was martyred in the temple's court.

2 Chr 24:20 And the Spirit of God came upon **Zechariah** the son of Jehoiada the priest, which stood above the people, and said unto them, Thus saith God, Why transgress ye the commandments of the LORD, that ye cannot prosper? because ye have forsaken the LORD, he hath also forsaken you.

2 Chr 24:21 And they conspired against him, and **stoned him with stones at the commandment of the king in the court of the house of the LORD.**

2 Chr 24:22 Thus Joash the king remembered not the kindness which Jehoiada his father had done to him, but slew his son. And when he died, he said, The LORD look upon it, and require it.

King Joash, who had Zechariah stoned within the temple's court (2 Chr 24:20-22), was the 13th king of the northern kingdom of Israel, and he ruled from 798-782 B.C. There can be no reasonable doubt that this is *precisely* the Zechariah that Jesus was referring to, because of the uniqueness of where he was martyred.

Now, the author of the Old Testament book of Zechariah lived during the reign of Darius I :

Zec 1:1 In the eighth month, in the second year of Darius, came the word of the LORD unto Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo the prophet, saying,

The second year of the reign of Darius I (the great) is dated to 520 B.C., so this Zechariah, who authored the book by the same name, lived some *250 years after* the Zechariah that 2 Chr 24:20-22 explicitly tells us was martyred in the temple court, and Chronicles *is* the last book of the Hebrew canon, not Zechariah. Jesus was clearly naming two well known *martyrs* to indicate the first and last books of the canonical scriptures. It is simply ridiculous to suggest that Mat 23:35 indicates the author of the Old Testament book of Zechariah, when there is absolutely no evidence in scripture that he was martyred, much less martyred in the temple court.

That the author of Zechariah was the "son of Berechiah", and the earlier martyred Zechariah was the "son of Barachias", may simply indicate that the two had a common ancestor, or it may be that both men had an ancestor with a similar name.

The photo reprint of the 1899 Douay-Rheims Catholic Bible that I have, interestingly enough, acknowledges in the footnotes for *both* Matthew 23:35 and Luke 11:51, that the Zechariah martyred in 2 Chronicles is indicated. But a 1950 printing of the Douay-Rheims that I have has no footnotes for those verses at all! What changed? I think it has finally dawned on Catholics what the implications of referring to the Zechariah in 2 Chronicles means, and they now realize they really do *not* want to go there, because it clearly and logically results in an endorsement of the Hebrew Canon of the Old Testament!

The 1970 New American Bible for Catholics I have, in the footnote for Matthew 23:35, wrongly asserts that the author of the Old Testament book of Zechariah is indicated, while curiously it *also* refers the reader to the footnote for Luke 11:51, which points rightly to the Zechariah martyred in 2 Chronicles! So according to the more recent NAB, *two different men* are meant in the *parallel* passages of Matthew 23:35 and Luke 11:51! Amazing!

Bear also in mind that in Jesus time there were no books like we have today. All books of the Scripture in that time were written in scrolls, each book in one scroll. Whilst grouping them was possible, they had stack of scrolls, i.e. there was no clear order of the books. Even after Codex (plural Codices) which resembled modern book was later introduced to replace scrolls, the arrangement of the books of the Bible might be different with that of today.

Jesus said what He said, the way He said it, for a clear and distinct reason. As discussed in my essay on the [Hebrew Canon](#), it is quite clear that by saying *from Able to Zacharias*, Jesus was referring to the entire span of of the Hebrew scriptures, i.e., from Genesis to 2 Chronicles. The above is nothing but an attempt to muddy the waters, to obfuscate the truth and dissipate any understanding of the clear intention of the words of Christ.

Encyclopedia Judaica Volume 4 page 829-830 gives eight different ancient arrangements of the Writings with Chronicles appears as the first or the last book. Leningrad Codex, the standard Masoretic text of the Jewish scripture has Chronicles as the first book of the Writings. Thus Chronicles is not always the last book of the Jewish scripture.

As I say in my essay:

Previous to the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, the two oldest known complete Hebrew (Masoretic) texts of the Bible were the [Aleppo Codex](#) dated to the 10th century A.D. and the [Leningrad Codex](#), dated to the early 11th century A.D. Both these texts, attributed to Ben-Asher, placed Chronicles at the *beginning* of the 3rd division, the Ketuvim (Writings). However, modern reprints of the Leningrad Codex have moved the book of Chronicles back to its tradition place at the end of the Ketuvim. See [Biblia Hebraica Leningradensia](#)

That there have been a few variant orderings of the Ketuvim, placing Chronicles as the first book of the third division, is not particularly significant, as that bit of trivia in no way impeaches the very clear intent of the context of Christ's words in Matthew 23:35, Luke 11:51, and Luke 24:44. Jesus was very clearly and explicitly referring to the order and divisions of the books in the Hebrew Bible as the complete span of scripture in His day, and there is no possible way His words can be taken to mean anything else. I think we have a deliberate trap set by Jesus Christ to ensnare and expose those who He knew would attempt to corrupt the Old Testament Hebrew canon by adding spurious apocryphal books, and the trap has worked marvelously.

Rebuttal to paragraph 13:

Catholics do not deny that God spoke in the past through Jewish prophets (Hebrews 1:1) and their words were put in written form by the Jews; that is what Paul meant in Romans 3:8. Bear in mind that deuterocanonical books were also written by Jews. During Jesus and His apostles' time the canon of the Old Testament was still open-ended. They never gave us the list of inspired books of both the Old and New Testaments.

The assertion that the Old Testament canon was still open-ended in apostolic times is flatly contradicted by the collective words of Christ in Matthew 23:35, Luke 11:51, and Luke 24:44, which firmly and unequivocally endorse the content, ordering and divisions of only the Hebrew canon. The deuterocanonical/apocryphal books, while written by Jews, were never universally accepted as canonical by the majority of the Jewish community.

If the Church later through the guidance of the Holy Spirit defined the canon of the New Testament then why she could not define the canon of the Old Testament as well?

It can be concluded with confidence, from the words of Christ cited, that every Roman Catholic council that defined the canon, including the allegedly infallible declaration of the Council of Trent, was in error, and every Catholic Bible printed contains non-canonical apocryphal books that are not a part of the inspired Old Testament.

CAI's Wibisono Hartono Responds

(Revised 7 Sept 2002)

My Original Counterpoint To Wibisono Hartono

In the first section of his reply, Wibisono Hartono makes these assertions:

The closest reference to the three divisions of the Jewish scripture in the New Testament is from Luke 24:44 that says "the Law of Moses, the Prophets and Psalms", of which Mr. Scheifler wrote "he [Jesus] means every book of the Old Testament, including Daniel." The problem with his argument is there is neither support in the New Testament nor from Jewish source that naming one book means naming the rest.

and

Thus the term scripture and the phrase "all the scriptures" in Luke 24:27 (which Mr. Scheifler asked me to take special note) refers only to those who were already accepted in that time.

Note the following excerpt from the Pontifical Biblical Commission on the Vatican web site (red font emphasis is mine)

**THE JEWISH PEOPLE AND THEIR SACRED SCRIPTURES IN THE
CHRISTIAN BIBLE**
(May 24, 2001)
[Online at the Vatican](#)

**I. THE SACRED SCRIPTURES OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE ARE A
FUNDAMENTAL PART OF THE CHRISTIAN BIBLE**

B. *The New Testament attests conformity to the Jewish Scriptures*

6. A twofold conviction is apparent in other texts: on the one hand, what is written in the Jewish Scriptures must of necessity be fulfilled because it reveals the plan of God which cannot fail to be accomplished; on the other hand, the life, death and resurrection of Christ are fully in accord with the Scriptures.

1. *Necessity of fulfilling the Scriptures*

The clearest expression of this is found in the words addressed by the risen Christ to his disciples, in the Gospel of Luke: "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you — that everything written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms must (dei) be fulfilled" (Lk 24:44). This assertion shows the basis of the necessity (*dei*, "must") for the paschal mystery of Jesus, affirmed in numerous passages in the Gospels: "The Son of Man *must* undergo great suffering...and after three days rise again";¹⁵ "But how then would the Scriptures be fulfilled which say it *must* happen this way?" (Mt 26:54); "This Scripture *must* be fulfilled in me" (Lk 22:37).

Because **what is written in the Old Testament “must” be fulfilled**, the events take place “*so that*” it is fulfilled. This is what Matthew often expresses in the infancy narrative, later on in Jesus' public life¹⁶ and for the whole passion (Mt 26:56). Mark has a parallel to the last mentioned passage in a powerfully elliptic phrase: “But let the Scriptures be fulfilled” (Mk 14:49). Luke does not use this expression but John has recourse to it almost as often as Matthew does.¹⁷ The Gospels' insistence on the purpose of these events “so that the Scriptures be fulfilled”¹⁸ attributes the utmost importance to the Jewish Scriptures. It is clearly understood that these events would be meaningless if they did not correspond to what the Scriptures say. It would not be a question there of the realisation of God's plan.

...

2. *Conformity to the Scriptures*

7. ... In the Gospel of Luke, Jesus appropriates a saying of Isaiah (Lk 4:17-21; Is 61:1-2) to define his mission as he begins his ministry. The ending of the Gospel expands this perspective when it speaks of **fulfilling “all that is written” about Jesus (Lk 24:44)**.

On that point, it is essential, according to Jesus, to “hear **Moses and the prophets**”, the ending of the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus (Lk 16:29-31) drives home the point: without a docile listening, even the greatest prodigies are of no avail.

II. FUNDAMENTAL THEMES IN THE JEWISH SCRIPTURES AND THEIR RECEPTION INTO FAITH IN CHRIST

A. *Christian Understanding of the relationships between the Old and New Testaments*

1. *Affirmation of a reciprocal relationship*

By “Old Testament” the Christian Church has no wish to suggest that the Jewish Scriptures are outdated or surpassed.³⁷ On the contrary, it has always affirmed that the Old Testament and the New Testament are inseparable. Their first relationship is precisely that. At the beginning of the second century, when Marcion wished to discard the Old Testament, he met with vehement resistance from the post-apostolic Church. Moreover, his rejection of the Old Testament led him to disregard a major portion of the New — he retained only the Gospel of Luke and some Pauline Letters — which clearly showed that his position was indefensible. **It is in the light of the**

Old Testament that the New understands the life, death and glorification of Jesus (cf. 1 Co 15:3-4).

This relationship is also reciprocal: on the one hand, the New Testament demands to be read in the light of the Old [Testament], but it also invites a “re-reading” of the Old [Testament] in the light of Jesus Christ (cf. Lk 24:45). How is this “re-reading” to be done? It extends to “all the Scriptures” (Lk 24:27) to “everything written in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms” (24:44), but the New Testament only offers a limited number of examples, not a methodology.

Now Mr. Hartono would have us believe that the reference to Psalms in Luke 24:47 is strictly limited to that book alone, and that the rest of the books of the third division of the Hebrew canon (Proverbs, Job, Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, and 1 and 2 Chronicles) are to be *excluded*. Were *none* of these books accepted as canonical by the Jews in the time of Christ? The Pontifical Bible Commission, in context, apparently considers Luke 24:44 to refer to the whole of the Hebrew Old Testament - “all the Scriptures” (Lk 24:27), and does not specifically exclude any of the other books of the third division that begins with Psalms. Perhaps Mr. Hartono should write the commission and inform them of their misinterpretation.

Mr. Hartono also makes this assertion:

The translated phrase “old testament” [2 Cor. 3:14] does not refer to list of books known to us as the Old Testament but to the old covenant of Law from Moses.

Again, continuing with quotes from the Pontifical Biblical Commission's document:

I. THE SACRED SCRIPTURES OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE ARE A FUNDAMENTAL PART OF THE CHRISTIAN BIBLE

2. ...

A perennial manifestation of this link to their beginnings is the acceptance by Christians of the Sacred Scriptures of the Jewish people as the Word of God addressed to themselves as well. Indeed, the Church has accepted as inspired by God all the writings contained in the Hebrew Bible as well as those in the Greek Bible. **The title “Old Testament” given to this collection of writings is an expression coined by the apostle Paul to designate the writings attributed to Moses (cf. 2 Co 3:14-15). Its scope has been extended, since the end of the second century, to include other Jewish writings in Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek.**

II. FUNDAMENTAL THEMES IN THE JEWISH SCRIPTURES AND THEIR RECEPTION INTO FAITH IN CHRIST

A. *Christian Understanding of the relationships between the Old and New Testaments*

2. *Re-reading the Old Testament in the light of Christ*

The examples given show that different methods were used, taken from their cultural surroundings, as we have seen above.³⁸ The texts speak of typology³⁹ and of reading in the light of the Spirit (2 Co 3:14-17). These suggest a twofold manner of reading, in its original meaning at the time of writing, and a subsequent interpretation in the light of Christ.

In Judaism, re-readings were commonplace. The Old Testament itself points the way. For example, in the episode of the manna, while not denying the original gift, the meaning is deepened to become a symbol of the Word through which God continually nourishes his people (cf. Dt 8:2-3). The Books of Chronicles are a re-reading of the Book of Genesis and the Books of Samuel and Kings. What is specific to the Christian re-reading is that it is done, as we have said, in the light of Christ.

This new interpretation does not negate the original meaning. **Paul clearly states that “the very words of God were entrusted” to the Israelites (Rm 3:2) and he takes it for granted that these words of God could be read and understood before the coming of Christ. Although he speaks of a blindness of the Jews with regard to “the reading of the Old Testament” (2 Co 3:14), he does not mean a total incapacity to read, only an inability to read it in the light of Christ.**

In context, the Pontifical Biblical Commission is clearly interpreting 2 Cor. 3:14 to mean the *entire Old Testament* of the Jews, and *not* just the Old Covenant Law from Moses. Again, it seems that Mr. Hartono should inform Rome of their error.

2 Cor 3:14 But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which veil is done away in Christ.

2 Cor 3:15 But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart.

Paul's remarks are not intended to completely exclude of the rest of the Old Testament. This same "veil" over the Old Testament is also evident in Luke:

Luke 16:29 **Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.**

Luke 16:30 **And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent.**

Luke 16:31 **And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.**

This blindness to the gospel of Jesus Christ for the Jew applied not only to the writings of Moses (though they are clearly emphasized by Paul), but to the whole of the Hebrew Old Testament (Moses and the prophets), the prophecies of which clearly pointed to, and were fulfilled by only one man, Jesus of Nazareth. And this was just as true at the time Paul wrote that passage in Corinthians as it is today, though the Pontifical Biblical Commission maintains it was not until the second century that this wider understanding of the term was applied.

While *I* do not base what I believe on the opinions of the Pontifical Biblical Commission, is not a Roman Catholic subject to, and bound by, their Magisterial authority in such matters? Or, are Roman Catholics free to give their own private interpretations regarding scripture, even if it contradicts Magisterial teaching?



<http://biblelight.net>

A Challenge To The Scripture Expert At EWTN's Web Forum

An Open letter to Fr. John Echert, S.S.L, ([EWTN Scripture, Divine Revelation Forum Expert](#)), 13 July 2001:

I am publicly offering you my article at biblelight.net/hebrew-canon.htm as proof from the New Testament, that quotes of Christ Himself show conclusively that the Hebrew Canon was the only Old Testament canon recognized by Christ and the Apostles, and consequently, all Catholic councils and papal decrees defining the canon have been in error.

This open letter to you is appended to the above article, and your detailed response is respectfully solicited. Your EWTN forum posted reply, if any, will also be added to the article.

Michael Scheifler

- [Go to the article on the Old Testament Canon](#)

- [Fr. Echert's First Answer - 16 July 2001](#)
- [My First Reply - 18 July 2001](#)
- [Fr. Echert's Second Answer - 19 July 2001](#)
- [Email from EWTN's Vice President, Colin Donovan - 20 July 2001](#)
- [My reply to Colin Donovan - 20 July 2001](#)
- [Colin Donovan's Second Email - 20 July 2001](#)
- [My Second Reply to Colin Donovan - 20 July 2001](#)
- [My Third Email to Colin Donovan - 23 July 2001](#)
- [EWTN Capitulates and Removes All Related Forum Entries.](#)
- [Colin Donovan's Third Email - 31 July 2001](#)
- [My Fourth Email to Colin Donovan - 1 August 2001](#)
- [Colin Donovan's Fourth Email - 1 August 2001](#)
- [My Fifth Email to Colin Donovan - 1 August 2001](#)
- [Colin Donovan's Fifth Email - 2 August 2001](#)
- [My Sixth Email to Colin Donovan - 3 August 2001](#)
- [Colin Donovan's Sixth Email - 3 August 2001](#)
- [My Seventh Email to Colin Donovan - 4 August 2001](#)
- [Colin Donovan's Seventh Email - 6 August 2001](#)
- [My Eighth Email to Colin Donovan - 12 August 2001](#)

When posted to his forum, Fr. Echert censored the web address from my open letter, so as to prevent, or at least hinder, his Catholic readers from finding and reading the above article in its entirety. Catholics, I have found, resort to this obviously unfair censorship tactic time and time again when they realize they have a lost cause on their hands and cannot adequately defend themselves against the truth.

**Fr. John Echert's First Answer, Posted 16 July 2001
(Deleted at EWTN on 24 July)**

Answer by Fr. John Echert on 07-16-2001:

I will respond to your major points as time allows me, with the possibility of subsequent responses. You wrote:

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...first, let's begin with the following passage:

Rom 3:1 What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision? Rom 3:2 Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God.

Now in the Roman Catholic Douay Rheims translation that reads: Rom 3:1 What advantage then hath the Jew, or what is the profit of circumcision? Rom 3:2 Much in every way. First indeed, because the words of God were committed to them.

So the word of God was committed originally to the Jews. As the designated custodians of the inspired word of God, they knew which books were canonical, and which were not, and they knew this without the assistance of the yet to appear Catholic Church.

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First I point out your inconsistency with regards to the manner in which the sacred canon is known. For you accept that the Old Covenant Jews collectively “knew which books were canonical” yet you reject that the New Covenant Israel which is the Church—often referred to as the Catholic Church—is likewise guided by divine Providence to “know which books are canonical.” Do you really imagine that God guided Israel of old to know the canon but failed to do so with regards to the New Israel?

Secondly, you wrote the following:

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Luke 24:44 And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. Luke 24:45 Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, Here in the above verse, Jesus divides the written word of God into three categories. The Hebrew Bible, known by the acronym TaNaKh, has these three divisions, first the Torah, the first five books of Moses, second the Nevi'im or Prophets, and third the Ketuvim or Writings. Christ was appearing to the disciples shortly after His resurrection and He was expounding to His disciples on the testimony of the scriptures about Himself, from one end of the Bible to the other. From the beginning at Moses; next to the prophets; and then on to the last division that began with Psalms; Christ explained from the Hebrew Bible, the TaNaKh, how it revealed Him to be the Messiah.

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It must be noted that simply by referring to three major categories of types of writings of the Old Testament, this in no way precludes that there may be other writings or types of writings. To use an analogy, if I were to say that my mother and my father and my sister

all testify that I am a Roman Catholic priest, such does not preclude other family members or other sources from affirming that same truth. Furthermore, the deuterocanonical writings—wrongly referred to as the Apocrypha by some—can be fit into these categories as readily as the modern Jews fit other writings into them. For instance, Joshua and Judges are historical works and yet Jews list them under the category of prophets. They are more properly historical works and precede the prophetic period of Israel. What is your basis for assuming that they belong under the category “prophets” apart from modern Jewish preference? And the category of “the Writings” is so loose as to allow the inclusion of such works as “Wisdom” and others.

Thirdly, a careful study of the texts of the Old Testament which are quoted in the New Testament reveals much more affinity with the texts of the Greek Septuagint version of the Old Testament than any known Hebrew text, most especially the Masoretic text which has been the basis of biblical scholarship and translations for centuries, for Catholics and Protestants. Unless you can produce a Hebrew text of the Old Testament which accounts for such quotes in the New Testament (over 300) your assumption should favor the use of the text of the Septuagint as the basis for the New Testament. And the Septuagint, of course, contains the works referred to as deuterocanonical.

Finally, you cite the Dead Sea scrolls as important in establishing the presence of Hebrew texts in Israel:

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While many have previously believed that Christ and the Apostles used the Greek Septuagint because it was the common tongue of the day, the recent discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls at Qumran proves conclusively that the Old Testament was available in Hebrew in Israel at the time of Christ.

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Of course, the Essene community that made use of these texts comprised isolationists who did not associate with mainstream Judaism; in fact, they did not regard Temple worship as legitimate and cannot be regarded as normative with regards to their texts. But more to the point, if you wish to use the Dead Sea Scrolls as important in establishing what was used in Israel at the time of Christ, then by your own admission in your text you should acknowledge and accept at least two of the deuterocanonical works which were found in fragment parts at Qumran. As you wrote:

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No Jewish source versions of the Septuagint are known to exist today, fueling speculation that the apocryphal books may never have been a part of the

original Jewish produced Greek manuscript, but were only included in subsequent Christian copies. The caves of Qumran, in which were found all of the canonical books of the Old Testament except Esther, also contained fragments of chapter 6 of the apocryphal Ecclesiasticus [Wisdom of Jesus the Son of (Ben) Sirach] in Hebrew, found in Cave 2, and a fragment of Tobit in Aramaic, found in Cave 4.

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The bottom line, Michael, is that without the Sacred Tradition of the Church, not only would the canon of the Bible remain uncertain but it is likely that at least some of the works would have been lost or mixed amidst so many other apocryphal writings from the ancient Jewish and Christian world. To justify the elimination of the deutero-canonical works you basically have to reject the councils and great Scriptural writers such as St. Augustine from at least as early as the fourth century AD. I invite you to reconsider your position. ©

Father Echert

For the convenience of the reader, my comments will continue in this normal font, with a blue background, while the specific remarks of Fr. John Echert that I am responding to will be in the indented yellow background in boldface. The entire text of his response can be read above. It has been deleted at EWTN.

My 1st Reply of 18 July 2001

I find it very curious that you censored my article's web address for your Catholic readers, while there is no similar censorship on my web site. What are you afraid of? Don't your Catholic readers have the right to read my ENTIRE article for themselves on my web page, and not just the small fraction of it you choose to cite?

If my article had no merit, and could be easily refuted by you, it is likely that you would not have deleted the web address. That you have felt compelled to censor it has an obvious implication, which I think both Catholic and Protestant readers will easily discern. If the truth is clearly on your side, then you would simply have no need to censor or restrict access to an opposing point of view. The effect of your censorship will serve only to peak the interest of your readers, and perhaps motivate them enough to find the article via a web search engine, in spite of your censorship.

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First I point out your inconsistency with regards to the manner in which the sacred canon is known. For you accept that the Old Covenant Jews collectively “knew which books were canonical” yet you reject that the New Covenant Israel which is the Church—often referred to as the Catholic Church—is likewise guided by divine Providence to “know which books are canonical.”

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There is no inconsistency on my part at all. Up until the time of Christ the Hebrew canon was known, though no church council had formally declared it. Consistency, if you demand it, would not require a formal declaration of either the New or Old Testament canon by any Catholic council.

It is clear from the 3 passages cited from the New Testament in my article that Christ defined the Hebrew canon as the inspired scriptures of His time. This automatically excludes the Apocryphal books from canonical consideration. The responsibility of the Christian church was to collect and preserve the inspired doctrinal, historical and prophetic writings of the apostolic era, and it could have done this just like the Jews, without a single Catholic council or papal declaration.

Now the issue of who has the authority to define and declare the canon of scripture is academic when both Protestant and Catholic agree on the content of the New Testament. However, when it comes to the Old Testament canon, where there is a discrepancy, can there be any higher authority than the words of Christ Himself?

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Do you really imagine that God guided Israel of old to know the canon but failed to do so with regards to the New Israel?

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God has not failed. The same canon that Christ knew and referred to 3 times is acknowledged by Protestantism today as the complete Old Testament. If anyone has failed, it was the councils and popes of the Catholic Church who erred regarding the Old Testament canon.

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It must be noted that simply by referring to three major categories of types of writings of the Old Testament, this in no way precludes that there

may be other writings or types of writings. To use an analogy, if I were to say that my mother and my father and my sister all testify that I am a Roman Catholic priest, such does not preclude other family members or other sources from affirming that same truth.

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On the contrary, when Luke 24:44-45, Matt. 23:35 and Luke 11:51 are studied together in context, there can be only one conclusion, that being that Christ was undoubtedly referring to the Hebrew canon as the entire span of inspired scripture of His day. This is so clear as to be unimpeachable.

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Furthermore, the deutero-canonical writings—wrongly referred to as the Apocrypha by some—can be fit into these categories as readily as the modern Jews fit other writings into them.

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Can you cite a single scholar that logically concludes that Christ was referring to the Old Testament canon of the Greek Septuagint in Luke 24:44-45?

Has the Septuagint EVER been classified into three categories identical to the Hebrew Bible?

Since the ordering of books in every Septuagint known is radically different than the Hebrew Bible, I dare say the answer to these two questions is definitely NO.

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For instance, Joshua and Judges are historical works and yet Jews list them under the category of prophets. They are more properly historical works and precede the prophetic period of Israel. What is your basis for assuming that they belong under the category “prophets” apart from modern Jewish preference?

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The theoretical placement of Joshua or Judges in either the Prophets or Writings does have any relevance to this discussion. What matters are the three divisions of the Hebrew Bible,

and the first and last books as referred to by Christ. These simply cannot be applied to the Septuagint.

As additional evidence, I would suggest that the following verses all refer to the first two divisions of the Hebrew Bible when they cite the Law and the Prophets. These 11 verses, by the way, are quoted from the Roman Catholic Douay Rheims translation:

Mat 5:17 Do not think that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets. I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill.

Mat 7:12 All things therefore whatsoever you would that men should do to you, do you also to them. For this is the law and the prophets.

Mat 11:13 For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John:

Mat 22:40 On these two commandments dependeth the whole law and the prophets.

Luke 16:16 The law and the prophets were until John; from that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every one useth violence towards it.

Luke 24:44 And he said to them: These are the words which I spake to you, while I was yet with you, that all things must needs be fulfilled, which are written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me.

John 1:45 Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith to him: We have found him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets did write, Jesus the son of Joseph of Nazareth.

Acts 13:15 And after the reading of the law and the prophets, the rulers of the synagogue sent to them, saying: Ye men, brethren, if you have any word of exhortation to make to the people, speak.

Acts 24:14 But this I confess to thee, that according to the way, which they call a heresy, so do I serve the Father and my God, believing all things which are written in the law and the prophets:

Acts 28:23 And when they had appointed him a day, there came very many to him unto his lodgings; to whom he expounded, testifying the kingdom of God, and persuading them concerning Jesus, out of the law of Moses and the prophets, from morning until evening.

Rom 3:21 But now without the law the justice of God is made manifest, being witnessed by the law and the prophets.

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And the category of “the Writings” is so loose as to allow the inclusion of such works as “Wisdom” and others.

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Not true. Matt. 23:35 and Luke 11:51 both make clear that Christ was referring to 2nd Chronicles as the very last book in the inspired Scriptures. This agrees with the current and historical Hebrew Bible. But most notably, the cited verses can never be reconciled with the altered ordering of the Septuagint. Matthew 23:35 and Luke 11:51 with Luke 24:44 are absolutely airtight, and do not allow the inclusion of the Apocryphal books of the Septuagint.

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Thirdly, a careful study of the texts of the Old Testament which are quoted in the New Testament reveals much more affinity with the texts of the Greek Septuagint version of the Old Testament than any known Hebrew text, most especially the Masoretic text which has been the basis of biblical scholarship and translations for centuries, for Catholics and Protestants. Unless you can produce a Hebrew text of the Old Testament which accounts for such quotes in the New Testament (over 300) your assumption should favor the use of the text of the Septuagint as the basis for the New Testament. And the Septuagint, of course, contains the works referred to as deuterocanonical.

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It is indeed recognized today that many of the New Testament quotes of Old Testament verses are citations of the Greek Septuagint. This does not, however, lead to the conclusion that the New Testament writers accepted the canon of the Septuagint, for the following reasons:

As Greek was a common language of the day, I will concede that the Apostles likely taught from scrolls of the Septuagint for their Greek speaking audiences.

However, were I a Jew or Gentile in the first century who spoke both Hebrew and Greek fluently, and my audience likely knew Greek but maybe not Hebrew, I too would not hesitate to teach and cite from a Greek translation of the Hebrew canon, like the Septuagint, even if it may have collectively contained some extraneous non-canonical works. I as a Protestant sometimes cite from the Catholic Douay Rheims (as I have done above) or other Catholic editions of the Bible, because it suits my purpose to make a point to a Catholic in their own translation. However, this does not in any way mean that I endorse the Catholic canon, or presumed Catholic authority to declare the canon. In like

manner, apostolic era use of the Greek Septuagint in no way constitutes an endorsement of the Apocryphal / Deuterocanonical books.

So the assumption that the New Testament writers accepted the Catholic canon, simply because they quoted from the Septuagint, lacks any merit.

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... if you wish to use the Dead Sea Scrolls as important in establishing what was used in Israel at the time of Christ, then by your own admission in your text you should acknowledge and accept at least two of the deuterocanonical works which were found in fragment parts at Qumran.

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I said the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls at Qumran proves conclusively that the Old Testament was available in Hebrew in Israel at the time of Christ. I did NOT say Qumran made a case for canonicity. There were dozens of non-canonical works at Qumran, and the presence, or absence, of a particular book in the Qumran collection does not provide one iota of proof for, or against, canonicity. Even if all the Apocryphal books of the Septuagint had been found at Qumran, this would NOT establish their acceptance as part of the canon. Qumran was a LIBRARY, which likely collected every religious scroll it could get possession of or duplicate. My own personal library contains many Catholic works, to include Catholic catechisms and several Catholic Bibles, but this does not make me a Catholic, nor does it indicate I accept the Catholic canon. This would quite obviously apply to Qumran.

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The bottom line, Michael, is that without the Sacred Tradition of the Church, not only would the canon of the Bible remain uncertain but it is likely that at least some of the works would have been lost or mixed amidst so many other apocryphal writings from the ancient Jewish and Christian world.

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I reject that premise, as it denies the power of God to preserve His inspired word. I maintain that we would still have the same 66 books of the Protestant Bible today, even if no Catholic council had EVER declared the canon.

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To justify the elimination of the deutero-canonical works you basically have to reject the councils and great Scriptural writers such as St. Augustine from at least as early as the fourth century AD.

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On this point you are 100% correct. I do most emphatically and completely reject all Catholic councils, papal decrees, and Church fathers who endorsed the Apocryphal books. My authority for this, as made clear from my article, is the quotations of Christ previously cited in the New Testament. To the unbiased reader, the infallible magisterium of the Catholic Church, and the whole of Catholic Tradition falls like a house of cards on this one point.

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I invite you to reconsider you position.

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You have not presented anything that refutes the words of Jesus Christ that I have cited. You are asking me to turn my back on truth that I can see clearly in Holy Scripture, for Catholic Tradition which plainly contradicts the teaching of Jesus Christ.

I invite you, and your Catholic readers to abandon the Traditions of men, and the allegedly infallible Magisterium that clearly erred in declaring the Apocryphal books canonical, and adopt in their stead the 66 books of the Protestant Bible as the sole ruler of faith.

Again, your reply, if any, will be appended to my article at biblelight.net/hebrew-canon.htm

Michael Scheifler

**Answer by Fr. John Echert on 07-19-2001
(Deleted at EWTN on 23 July 2001)**

Michael:

Not only did I delete your web address in the previous post but I have deleted your arguments in this post, which may mislead the Faithful who are in full communion with the Church. In so doing I am guarding what has been entrusted to me, as the Bible teaches:

[1 Tim] 6:20 O Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you. Avoid the godless chatter and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge, 6:21 for by professing it some have missed the mark as regards the faith. Grace be with you.

[2 Tim] 1:13 Follow the pattern of the sound words which you have heard from me, in the faith and love which are in Christ Jesus; 1:14 guard the truth that has been entrusted to you by the Holy Spirit who dwells within us.

Father Echert

In resorting to this tactic of censorship, it should be clear to even Catholic readers that Fr. Echert has conceded that he is simply unable to deal with the truth, AND HE KNOWS IT. I could get no stronger endorsement from him that my article at biblelight.net/hebrew-canon.htm is *absolutely true*, and that it proves beyond any doubt that the Roman Catholic magisterium which claims to be infallible in matters of faith is no such thing, having clearly erred fundamentally in defining the canon of the Old Testament.

Heed this warning from Jesus Christ, Fr. Echert, for it applies to you!

Luke 11:52 **Woe unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge: ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered.**

An Email from EWTN's Vice President (EWTN is *not* a happy camper!)

**Subject: Your post of EWTN material at <http://biblelight.net/hebrew-canon.htm>
Date: 20 July 2001**

Dear Sir,

While you are entitled to your freedom of opinion about the Catholic Faith, you are not entitled legally or morally to violate the intellectual property rights of EWTN, as you have done, by taking either in whole or in part material from our site for posting on your own.

Consider this a notice to desist. We thank you in advance for doing so.

God bless.

Colin B. Donovan
Vice President
Eternal Word Television Network

My reply to Colin Donovan - dated 20 July 2001

Mr. Donovan,

With all due respect, please note the following points:

1. Fr. Echert was clearly notified IN ADVANCE that his reply to my inquiry, if any, would be published on my web site. Posting a response on EWTN's forum clearly constituted acceptance of that condition on his part. If that was a condition unacceptable to EWTN, then he was under no obligation to post my inquiry or his reply in the EWTN forum.
2. The applicable U.S. copyright law on fair use reads as follows:

[Sec. 107. Limitations on exclusive rights: Fair use](#)

Notwithstanding the provisions of sections 106 and 106A, the fair use of a copyrighted work, including such use by reproduction in copies or phonorecords or by any other means specified by that section, for purposes such as criticism, comment, news reporting, teaching (including multiple copies for classroom use), scholarship, or research, is not an infringement of copyright. In determining whether the use made of a work in any particular case is a fair use the factors to be considered shall include -

- (1) the purpose and character of the use, including whether such use is of a commercial nature or is for nonprofit educational purposes;
- (2) the nature of the copyrighted work;
- (3) the amount and substantiality of the portion used in relation to the copyrighted work as a whole; and
- (4) the effect of the use upon the potential market for or value of the copyrighted work. The fact that a work is unpublished shall not itself bar a finding of fair use if such finding is made upon consideration of all the above factors.

3. So, I am within the law in posting EWTN material on my web site so long as its for the purposes of one of the following conditions: criticism, comment, news reporting, or teaching. As anyone can plainly see, I have been well within my legal rights to repost my discussion with Fr. Echert on my web site, since it easily fits ALL these requirements.

4. Also, since I believe that the Roman Catholic Church is the Mystery Babylon spoken of by John in Revelation, I have a clear moral and religious obligation to preach this truth as best I can, so that people will know the truth and come OUT of Mystery Babylon. So my conscience is quite clear: I have NOT violated any sense of ethics or morality by reposting material regarding my discussion with Fr. Echert from EWTN's Scripture forum on my web site.

5. Consequently, I would maintain that you have no right, legally, ethically, or morally to censor my web site. I am clearly engaged in criticism, comment, and teaching that Roman Catholicism is a doctrinally apostate church. Since you, as Vice President of EWTN, have in your official capacity attempted to further censor me, that is also validly NEWS, and your email, and this response to you, have been appended to the article at <http://biblelight.net/hebrew-canon.htm>

6. Now should you wish to pursue this matter further in a court of law, I will be happy to call on the Religious Liberty legal resources of the Seventh-day Adventist Church to represent me. I don't think you want the kind of public attention that would automatically draw to this matter.

Michael Scheifler

When are Roman Catholics going to learn that the medieval tactic of censorship only serves to spread *even farther* the information they want so desperately to repress?

Colin Donovan's Second Email - 20 July 2001

**RE: Your post of EWTN material at <http://biblelight.net/hebrew-canon.htm>
Dated 20 July 2001**

For the Glory of the Most Holy Trinity,

Mr. Scheifler,

Thank you for your quick response. Given the facts as you state them your belief that you did not violate our copyright is understandable. However, Fr. Eckert does not have the

right to grant you copyright permission and you are hereby informed that any implied permission is revoked.

As for fair use, publishing something in its entirety, even for criticism, on the Internet can hardly constitute fair use, otherwise you could post a newly published novel, interspersed with your comments.

Finally, as for censorship, we have no power to censor you, as we have no control over your web site. We request that you apply the same standards of justice and charity that you would expect to have applied to yourself. Justice is "do unto others as you would have them do unto you." Charity is "to love your enemies."

I remain sincerely yours in Christ,
- Colin Donovan

My Second Reply to Colin Donovan - 20 July 2001

Mr. Donovan,

Under U.S. copyright law, fair use does not require your permission.

Also, please note point 4 [2] of the fair use clause:

2) the nature of the copyrighted work;

Due to the nature of my inquiry of Fr. Echert, and his responses, which involves a scholarly debate, it was patently unfair for him to censor the web address of my article, since he chose to voluntarily post my inquiry and respond to it. That web address was the only way some EWTN readers would be able to gain access to the article Fr. Echert was responding to, in order to judge for themselves the merits of my position. I will not be guilty of the same blatant unfairness on my web site. No true scholar interested in a free exchange of opposing ideas would even contemplate it.

Fr. Echert and EWTN have an undeniable right, in fairness, to have his entire remarks available in the same article as my comments in response to him. Any court would likely agree fully in this specific case. I expected the same sense of fair play, justice, and charity in the EWTN site that I rigidly follow on my web site, but I did not get it. That you are now attempting to remove Fr. Echert's responses from my web site only reinforces that fact.

Please heed the following counsel from the Apostle Paul:

1 Cor 6:1 Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints?

1 Cor 6:2 Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?

1 Cor 6:3 Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?

1 Cor 6:4 If then ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church.

1 Cor 6:5 I speak to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren?

1 Cor 6:6 But brother goeth to law with brother, and that before the unbelievers.

1 Cor 6:7 Now therefore there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another. Why do ye not rather take wrong? why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded?

If you still feel you have been wronged by me in this matter, then take this publicly before the church, via the EWTN web site, and not before a secular court, which, I am confident, would not support you in any case. Furthermore, If you can demonstrate to me clearly that I have legally wronged EWTN, and infringed on your intellectual property rights, then I assure you I will apologize and remove that infringing material from my web site.

Again, under that principle, I will post your 2nd email, as well as this response to my web site.

Michael Scheifler

My Third Email to Colin Donovan - 23 July 2001

Mr. Donovan,

I would like to refer you to Fr. Echert's forum and the following email he has posted from Anna on 07-20-2001:

<http://www.ewtn.com/vexperts/showmessage.asp?Pgnu=1&Pg=Forum7&recnu=8&number=213779>

[Deleted on 23 July at EWTN]

This is a most interesting development. Fr. Echert, who has been quite unable to logically rebut my article on the Hebrew Canon, has sunk to posting ad hominem that characterizes me as a demon possessed hate monger in need of psychiatric help. Is this the level of debate you encourage and condone at EWTN as a Vice President?

Now I am not suggesting for a moment that this item be removed, since I would never try to censor EWTN. PLEASE, let it remain, since it only helps me make my case against Catholicism to the discerning reader, Protestant and Catholic alike. I am positively

AMAZED that Fr. Echert is apparently unable to see this. It does make me wonder if he will post any emails he may have received from Catholics that are critical of his censorship. Would I be permitted to respond to this, and any similar email posted in his forum?

Should you choose to reply, I will add it after this email on my web page at:
<http://biblelight.net/hebrew-canon.htm>

Michael Scheifler

EWTN Capitulates and Removes All Related Forum Entries.

As a result of the above email, EWTN on 23 July edited its Scripture Forum as follows:

1. The bulk of Anna's remarks, mentioned above, have been edited out, leaving just two sentences. To anyone reading that item now, there is no hint at all that her remarks have been edited in any way at all. I doubt that anyone will find this practice acceptable. When remarks have been edited, it should be apparent to the reader exactly when and where editing has occurred.
2. The title of Anna's post, as well two others, were changed from my name to Sacred Scriptures.
3. Most significantly, Fr. Echert's second reply to me, that had been posted on [07-19-2001](#), where he admitted to censoring my point by point responses in order to protect his readers, has been deleted *entirely* by EWTN. Now it seems to the Catholic visitor to the Scripture Forum that I have never responded to Fr. Echert's initial posting on [7-16-2001](#) which, curiously, remains on EWTN's site, apparently unchanged. This erroneously leaves the impression that Fr. Echert has won the discussion by default. Could anything be more unfair than this?

On 24 July, Anna's post was totally deleted along with another that referred to my posts, as well as Fr. Echert's initial reply to my inquiry. Now *everything* related to my inquiry to EWTN has been expunged from the Scripture forum. The reason is obvious. Leaving anything at all in the Scripture forum was simply unacceptable and would provoke further discussion, and questions that EWTN would not be able to answer. There is only one way to view this, a complete capitulation on the part of EWTN on the topic of the Hebrew Canon, that my article on the [Hebrew Canon](#) is true, and totally beyond their capability to refute. This is so serious a threat to Catholicism, in their view, that *nothing* could be allowed to remain on the EWTN forum regarding it. It is as if it never happened, but many Catholics know it did, and they know why EWTN felt compelled to remove it.

Rev 18:2 And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, ...

Colin Donovan's Third Email - 31 July 2001

No, EWTN removed it because of the un-Christian polemics your efforts to proselytize on our web site were creating. Having abused the good will of others, such as by posting the private emails sent to you by myself in effort to address this matter, you have made a cordial resolution impossible.

Your dissertation on the Canon ignores the fact that no Hebrew canon existed until the late first century AD, when a council of Palestinian rabbis came up with one. This canon took centuries to be widely accepted among Jews, and hardly constitutes an authoritative position for the Church, to whom Christ gave a supernatural teaching charism. For moderns, those with recently founded theologies, like yourself to rely on merely rationalistic analysis, in a matter which historical science cannot definitively settle, is to fall victim to the same trap which divided the schools of rabbis in Our Lord's day and which His gift of apostolic authority to the Church was meant to prevent. Certainty in some matters of the faith is necessary for the salvation of souls. Apostolic Tradition guarantees the authenticity of those matters. Rationalistic arguments that go round and round do not.

God bless.

My Fourth Email to Colin Donovan - 01 August 2001

Mr. Donovan,

In reply to your email of 31 July:

No, EWTN removed it because of the un-Christian polemics your efforts to proselytize on our web site were creating.

I agree that the ad hominem from Anna that Fr. Echert posted in his forum was not in keeping with a scholarly Christian debate. Unfortunately, my experience has been that it is all too common for Catholics to react that way in such discussions.

Having abused the good will of others, such as by posting the private emails sent to you by myself in effort to address this matter, you have made a cordial resolution impossible.

I initiated the discussion with Fr. Echert, and from the very beginning EWTN was on notice it was an open email invitation to a public discussion, and any reply would be published on my web site. Now your "good will", as you put it, was nothing short of an attempt to censor my web site after the discussion was going very badly for EWTN, on a

topic you recognize to be of immense consequence to Catholicism, and not one you could afford to publicly lose.

You simply cannot allow Catholic readers access to the simple facts of this discussion because you fully realize you have nothing that will stand up in comparison to Christ's own very clear words. In effect, you have cut your losses through censorship on your own site, bailing out of a discussion that you perceive as a lost cause.

You also want any evidence of EWTN participation removed from my site as well, in order to conceal your inability to respond effectively. Your actions will be perceived by everyone as an acknowledgment on EWTN's part that you cannot refute the point I have raised, and know well the inevitable consequence: that the Catholic canon of the Old Testament is in error, and magisterial "infallibility" of Popes and Church Councils is nothing but a pious fraud.

Your dissertation on the Canon ignores the fact that no Hebrew canon existed until the late first century AD, when a council of Palestinian rabbis came up with one.

On the contrary, Christ and the Apostles had no problem at all identifying the canon of Scripture, as my essay shows quite clearly, long before the Council of Jamnia. That you want to divert attention from the easily discerned meaning of the cited verses comes as no real surprise.

In recent years Catholic apologists have made the claim that nowhere in scripture is the canon defined, and that this in their opinion, was surely a fatal blow to Sola Scriptura. Just in the last few hours I saw Fr. Levis and Fr. Trigilio make the same faulty argument on EWTN. I think there is a certain poetic justice in having that proved so conclusively wrong that all "infallible" Catholic Tradition falls inevitably after the simple truth regarding the Old Testament canon is known.

Does this leave Catholics adrift without an anchor on which to rely? No. It just confirms the absolute authority of Scripture as the sole ruler for doctrine, which has no peers in Popes, or Councils, or the Traditions of men. Only Scripture is our inspired infallible teacher.

This canon took centuries to be widely accepted among Jews, and hardly constitutes an authoritative position for the Church, to whom Christ gave a supernatural teaching charism.

Under the circumstances, I would never expect you to accept the Council of Jamnia as authoritative, since the Roman Catholic Church reserves that authority to itself. In any case, I do not rest my argument on the Council of Jamnia, but rather on the very sure

foundation of the words of Christ, cited in the New Testament. Those quotes have an authority that exceeds any council, and are something you simply cannot refute.

For moderns, those with recently founded theologies, like yourself to rely on merely rationalistic analysis, in a matter which historical science cannot definitively settle, is to fall victim to the same trap which divided the schools of rabbis in Our Lord's day and which His gift of apostolic authority to the Church was meant to prevent. Certainty in some matters of the faith is necessary for the salvation of souls. Apostolic Tradition guarantees the authenticity of those matters. Rationalistic arguments that go round and round do not.

The whole point of my essay addresses certainty, absolutely ironclad certainty pertaining to the Old Testament canon. I would respectfully submit that the words of Jesus Christ Himself show, quite clearly and quite irrefutably, that the Hebrew canon was regarded by Him to be the full extent of inspired scripture in His time. This excludes the Apocryphal books from canonical consideration, and is proof positive that "infallible" Popes and Church councils have erred in this regard.

Now if you still disagree, you are publicly, openly, and cordially invited to restore, and resume the discussion in your EWTN scripture forum on an intelligent and scholarly level, free of any ad hominem or repressive censorship of my remarks for your Catholic readers. Failing that, we can continue this open discussion on my web site, as we have been, where the comments of both sides are presented quite fairly, which is to say in full.

Again this is a public discussion, and this email and your reply, if any, will be posted on my web site.

Michael Scheifler

Colin Donovan's Fourth Email - 1 August 2001

Your assertion that the Jewish Canon was clear in Christ's day, and proclaimed by the Lord Himself, is just not historically accurate. For instance the reference in Lk. 24:44 to the Law, the Prophets and the Psalms refers in the first place to places in Sacred Scripture where prophecies of Christ are given. It is also a clear liturgical reference which every Jew would recognize, since Torah and haftorah readings in the synagogue were, and still are, taken from these books. He makes no mention of the Writings (except for Psalms). In Christ's day the historical, moral and wisdom literature were widely considered inspired, but not universally so. They were seldom used in the synagogue. Christ' reference is no more a complete canon than His listing of commandments in Mt 19:18 is a complete Ten Commandments.

As for Jamnia's canon, it was drawn up in contradistinction to the developing Christian Scriptures and theology. It can hardly be considered authoritative, or even representative of first century Judaism, to Christians. Why would Christians look to the People of the Old Law for their canon, when the fallibility of their traditions was clearly identified but Jesus. The Scriptures, correctly identified are not fallible, but the human judgment about what constitutes them, and how they are to be interpreted, is. Post-Exilic Judaism and Protestantism are sufficient proof of the error of private judgment. Only by means of a supernatural charism committed to the Church (as represented in Peter), as opposed to the leaven of the several Pharisee (and thousands of Protestant) theologies, can an authoritative canon be identified and an authoritative judgment about Scripture's meaning be proclaimed (Mt 16:5-18). Christ spoke with authority, and so does the Church. Mankind is free to take them or leave them. But as Augustine said, "No one can have God as His Father who does not also have the Church as His Mother" ... "if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican." (Mt. 18:17)

God bless.

P.S. Spare your readership your condescending insights into what other people mean, or the absolute certainty of your logical conclusions. Its poor scholarship. Unless you have a charism of infallibility, your conclusions are far from self-evident. That they are to you is simply human nature at work.

My Fifth Email to Colin Donovan - 1 August 2001

Mr. Donovan,

Regarding your email of 1 August:

Your assertion that the Jewish Canon was clear in Christ's day, and proclaimed by the Lord Himself, is just not historically accurate.

The historical record having the foremost authority in this matter is Scripture itself, and the words of Jesus Christ that testify to the three divisions of the Hebrew canon, and the references to the first and last books of that same canon. Since He is God incarnate, I expect He knows with unerring precision the extent of the canon.

It is also interesting that in all the discussion about Scripture in the New Testament, there was never a dispute recorded between the Christians and Jews over the canon. One would have to conclude that there was agreement in what comprised inspired Scripture, that being the same canon the Jews recognize today and call the TaNaKh, which excludes the Apocryphal books.

For instance the reference in Lk. 24:44 to the Law, the Prophets and the Psalms refers in the first place to places in Sacred Scripture where prophecies of Christ are given. It is also a clear liturgical reference which every Jew would recognize, since Torah and haftorah readings in the synagogue were, and still are, taken from these books. He makes no mention of the Writings (except for Psalms).

Psalms is the first and largest book in the third division of the Hebrew bible, and that last division apparently did not have a settled title in the time of Christ, hence the reference to only the first book of the division, which was obviously symbolic for what today is called the Ketuvim (Writings) or Hagiographa. It is not unknown for the Writings to simply be called Psalms, even historically by other writers.

In Christ's day the historical, moral and wisdom literature were widely considered inspired, but not universally so. They were seldom used in the synagogue. Christ's reference is no more a complete canon than His listing of commandments in Mt 19:18 is a complete Ten Commandments.

What Christ made reference to was the three Hebrew divisions of Scripture and the first and last books that define the limits of the Old Testament. While not literally a complete index of the inspired books, the Hebrew canon is obviously the one Christ recognized.

As for Jamnia's canon, it was drawn up in contradistinction to the developing Christian Scriptures and theology. It can hardly be considered authoritative, or even representative of first century Judaism, to Christians. Why would Christians look to the People of the Old Law for their canon, when the fallibility of their traditions was clearly identified by Jesus. The Scriptures, correctly identified are not fallible, but the human judgment about what constitutes them, and how they are to be interpreted, is. Post-Exilic Judaism and Protestantism are sufficient proof of the error of private judgment.

Again, the foundation upon which my essay is built is not Jamnia, it is the testimony of Christ recorded in the New Testament.

Only by means of a supernatural charism committed to the Church (as represented in Peter), as opposed to the leaven of the several Pharisee (and thousands of Protestant) theologies, can an authoritative canon be identified and an authoritative judgment about Scripture's meaning be proclaimed (Mt 16:5-18).

On the contrary, I am quite secure in the belief that I do not need Catholics to tell me what constitutes the canon, nor do I need Catholics to interpret the intended meaning of Holy Scripture.

Christ spoke with authority, and so does the Church. Mankind is free to take them or leave them. But as Augustine said, "No one can have God as His Father who does not also have the Church as His Mother" ... "if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican." (Mt. 18:17)

Well then, it boils down to just who the true remnant church is. John the Revelator defines the true church this way:

Rev 12:17 And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

Now I would suggest that my essay on the Hebrew canon is based quite securely on the testimony of Jesus Christ, while you are appealing instead to unbiblical Tradition. And as to keeping the commandments of God, we Seventh-day Adventists observe the seventh day of the week (Saturday) as a Sabbath day of rest, just as Exodus 20:8-11 declares. This Catholics clearly don't do, since they pride themselves in their changing this precept of God, making Sunday, the first day of the week, the day of worship and rest. This change Catholics also admit, is not based on any command found in Scripture, but rather on the Church's sense of its own power and authority, being rooted in nothing more than Tradition. So, based on Holy Scripture, you are not lining up with the characteristics delineating the true church.

P.S. Spare your readership your condescending insights into what other people mean, or the absolute certainty of your logical conclusions. Its poor scholarship. Unless you have a charism of infallibility, you conclusions are far from self-evident. That they are to you is simply human nature at work.

I will let my readers be the judge in this matter. At least my readers have that opportunity.

Again this is a public discussion, and this email and your reply, if any, will be posted on my web site.

Michael

Colin Donovan's Fifth Email - 2 August 2001

While Jesus knew with unerring accuracy the extent of the Canon you do not. A Canon is a list of the books, not a dart throw - "well, there's this group and there's this group, and there's that group." Either The Lord gave a list which is verifiable and complete or He did not. He did not, any more than He gave anything more than a representative listing of the Decalogue in Luke 24. Your assertion that the mention of a single book of the Writings at that place constitutes proof of your position on the extent of the third part of the Tanach is a logical non sequitur. This is especially true when the Jewish practice of the day clearly recognized the Psalms but not the historical or wisdom books. That leaves the question of the extent of inspiration with respect to the "Writings" to the Christian era, for which the Jamnia rabbis are not MY authority. Christ and His Apostles are. And if He didn't provide a Canon in the written Tradition (Scripture) then we must look to the oral Tradition (2 Thes. 2:15), as found in the ecclesiastical writings and decisions of the first centuries.

But lets be honest with your readers, as a Seventh day Adventist you can no more accept that the early Church received the Canon orally from Christ and the Apostles than you can accept that Sunday is the Day of the Lord in Acts 20:7 and Rev. 1:10. Your position is the absolute private interpretation of a less than 200 year old theological tradition, at odds with other Protestants on many points. Frankly, in many ways I find that a more honest sola scriptura position than the pick and choose "traditions" of liberal Catholics and Protestants. So, I think on the matter of whether there is an apostolic Tradition, distinct from merely human traditions, we will continue to disagree, hopefully amicably.

God bless.

My Sixth Email to Colin Donovan - 3 August 2001

Mr. Donovan,

Regarding your email of 2 August:

While Jesus knew with unerring accuracy the extent of the Canon you do not. A Canon is a list of the books, not a dart throw - "well, there's this group and there's this group, and there's that group." Either The Lord gave a list which is verifiable and complete or He did not. He did not, any more than He gave anything more than a representative listing of the Decalogue in Luke 24. [he means Matt 19:18-19]

In Matthew 19:18-19 Jesus mentions the last 6 Commandments of the second table of the Decalogue regarding our duty to mankind, and those not mentioned cover our duty to God. Now do you think it would have been necessary for Christ to list them all for His audience to fully understand what He was talking about, or did His audience know exactly and precisely what He meant? Without question they knew, since Jesus was referring to something that was long standing and well known, the 10 Commandments given to Moses

at Sinai. The fact that He did not mention them all does not permit the possibility that He could have been referring to some other nebulous list that included additional commandments, beyond the ten, as your position would logically require.

In a similar manner, there is simply no way Luke 24:44-45, Matt. 23:35 and Luke 11:51 can be applied to anything but the Hebrew canon, which is precisely what Christ's audience understood Him to be speaking about (explained in next paragraph).

Your assertion that the mention of a single book of the Writings at that place constitutes proof of your position on the extent of the third part of the Tanach is a logical non sequitur. This is especially true when the Jewish practice of the day clearly recognized the Psalms but not the historical or wisdom books. That leaves the question of the extent of inspiration with respect to the "Writings" to the Christian era, for which the Jamnia rabbis are not MY authority. Christ and His Apostles are. And if He didn't provide a Canon in the written Tradition (Scripture) then we must look to the oral Tradition (2 Thes. 2:15), as found in the ecclesiastical writings and decisions of the first centuries.

You seem to be overlooking a very important point. In Luke 24:44-45, Christ mentions Psalms, obviously pertaining to a third division of Scripture, and Psalms is the first and largest book of that division. Next, in Matt. 23:35 and Luke 11:51, the reference to Zechariah is plainly referring to the last book of Scripture, which in the Hebrew Bible is 2 Chronicles. So when these three verses are considered together, Christ has defined the third division of Old Testament Scripture as beginning at Psalms and ending with 2 Chronicles. Here is the logical result of what Christ said:

TaNaKh (Hebrew Bible As Delineated By Christ)		
The Law	The Prophets	The Writings
Genesis - Deuteronomy	Joshua - Malachi	Psalms - 2 Chronicles

Now this conclusion is plainly evident, and quite precise, *and can only apply to the Hebrew canon*, not the grouping and order of the Greek Septuagint, which is radically different [[see article](#)].

So if Christ is indeed your highest authority on this matter, then the inevitable result is quite clear, the canon of the Catholic Church is in error, and it must be rejected, along with "infallible" Popes and Councils who in error affirmed the Apocryphal books as canonical. That argument is so simple and logical as to be quite irrefutable.

But lets be honest with your readers, as a Seventh day Adventist you can no more accept that the early Church received the Canon orally from Christ and the Apostles than you can accept that Sunday is the Day of the Lord in Acts 20:7 and Rev. 1:10.

If you are suggesting that the Apocrypha were passed on by Christ via oral Tradition, you are correct, that is unacceptable, since it clearly contradicts the written record of Christ's teaching in the New Testament.

Now, as to the phrase "day of the Lord", it appears 25 times in scripture, in 23 verses, but I will cite just one passage:

Zep 1:14 The great day of the LORD is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the day of the LORD: the mighty man shall cry there bitterly.

Zep 1:15 That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness,

Now I would respectfully suggest that "day of the LORD" here, as elsewhere in scripture, is clearly a reference to the day of the second coming of Jesus Christ, and not Sunday.

Regarding Acts 20:7, it will apparently surprise you to know that I concede that the first day of the week is indeed Sunday. That is not in dispute by anyone that I know of. The question is whether or not "breaking bread" on that day constituted a communion service, and can be used as evidence that the disciples were keeping Sunday. On that issue, I will quote a Catholic publication:

Let us call attention to the same Acts 2d chapter, 46th verse: "And they, continuing daily in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house," etc. Who does not see at a glance that the text produced [Acts 20:7] to prove the exclusive prerogative of Sunday, vanishes into thin air — an ignis fatuus — when placed in juxtaposition with the 46th verse of the same chapter? What the Biblical Christian claims by this text for Sunday alone, the same authority, St. Luke, informs us was common to every day of the week: "And they, continuing daily in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house."

So the fact that they were breaking bread on the first day of the week proves nothing, since Acts 2:46 shows this was done daily. Sunday sacredness simply finds no support in Acts 20:7, and Catholics have freely admitted this.

On Revelation 1:10, and the expression "Lord's day", I quote the same Catholic source as above

Has St. John used the expression [Lord's day] previously in his Gospel or Epistles? — Emphatically, NO. Has he had occasion to refer to Sunday hitherto? — Yes, twice. How did he designate Sunday on these occasions? Easter Sunday was called by him (John 20:1)

"the first day of the week." Again, chapter twenty, nineteenth verse: "Now when it was late that same day, being the first day of the week." Evidently, although inspired, both in his Gospel and Epistles, he called Sunday "the first day of the week." On what grounds, then, can it be assumed that he dropped that designation? Was he more inspired when he wrote the Apocalypse, or did he adopt a new title for Sunday, because it was now in vogue? A reply to these questions would be supererogatory especially to the latter, seeing that the same expression had been used eight times already by St. Luke, St. Paul and St. Peter, all under divine inspiration, and surely the Holy Spirit would not inspire St. John to call Sunday the Lord's day, whilst He inspired Sts. Luke, Paul, and Peter, collectively, to entitle the day of judgment "the Lord's day."

See: [ROME'S CHALLENGE - Why Do Protestants Keep Sunday?](#)

Now the *Catholic Mirror*, quoted above, was the official organ of Cardinal Gibbons and the Papacy in the United States, and it eloquently makes the case that neither "day of the LORD" or "Lord's day" ever refer to Sunday in scripture, but rather to the second coming of Christ. It concludes that Sola Scriptura Protestants should either keep the seventh day (Saturday) holy as the Bible plainly teaches, or abandon Protestantism and the Bible as their only rule of faith to join the Catholic Church in its Tradition of Sunday keeping. I could not agree more.

Your position is the absolute private interpretation of a less than 200 year old theological tradition, at odds with other Protestants on many points. Frankly, in many ways I find that a more honest sola scriptura position than the pick and choose "traditions" of liberal Catholics and Protestants.

To their shame, there are indeed many so-called Protestants who nominally lay claim to Sola Scriptura, yet on many points follow Catholic Tradition rather than what the Bible teaches.

So, I think on the matter of whether there is an apostolic Tradition, distinct from merely human traditions, we will continue to disagree, hopefully amicably.

I think it will be apparent to most everyone that you have still not provided anything substantial in rebuttal, certainly nothing that would even come close to refuting the clear words of Christ delineating the Hebrew canon. Therefore, I cordially extend an invitation to you, and to all Catholic readers, to abandon the untrustworthy Traditions of men, and the allegedly infallible Catholic Magisterium that clearly erred in declaring the Apocryphal books canonical, and adopt in their stead the 66 books of the Protestant Bible as the sole ruler of faith.

Again this is a public discussion, and this email and your reply, if any, will be posted on my web site.

Michael

Colin Donovan's Sixth Email - 3 August 2001

And you have not given anything substantial in support of your position. By any definition your position is an interpretation. To the listeners of His day the Scriptures did not necessarily coincident to what you consider the extent of the Tanach. Jews differed on these matters, and Palestinian and Diaspora Jews quite considerably. You cannot make a case for an evident Canon based on Christ's words. If it requires interpolating, as you do, then it is a poor standard. Christ does not give poor standards, He provided a Church, which interpreted in His name and by His authority, as they did regarding whether the Mosaic law extent (Acts 15). As for the Decalogue, to list the commandments regarding man, (6 in Exodus, 7 in Deuteronomy), is still to give a partial list. The young man's question was which commandments must he keep to enter eternal life – apparently not those regarding God. Since that can't be true, Christ was giving a representative list. He didn't need to spell everything out because He did not leave His people at the mercy of their own private and incomplete interpretation of His words, but left them authoritative interpreters in His apostles, and those whom they appointed to succeed them as "overseers" (bishops) of the Church.

As for Saturday or Sunday, your position entails the absurd contention that all early Christians, including the thousands of martyrs for Christ during the imperial persecutions, were in error in celebrating Sunday, that the disciples of Christ turn a left turn as soon as the apostles died, and everyone was in error until modern Sabbatarians came along. You are entitled to your position. However, please admit that it has as its basis only your church's 18 centuries after the fact interpretation of Scripture.

Again, your claims to the self-evident meaning of Scripture, when you can drive a Volkswagen through the holes in your logic, begs the question of the correctness of your interpretation. YOU must prove, logically, syllogistically, your position, without "deus ex machina" filling in of the meaning. Literal words, not interpolations, please. I need not. Mine rests on the authority of the Apostolic Tradition. Scripture witnesses sufficiently to Catholic claims; witnesses, not proves. The Church like Christ speaks with authority, it doesn't proof-text. Peter, like Christ, is a stumbling stone (skandalon), upon which many rise or fall.

God bless.

My Seventh Email to Colin Donovan - 4 August 2001

Mr. Donovan,

Regarding your email of 3 August:

And you have not given anything substantial in support of your position.

I think even the average reader will be able to see that is just not true.

By any definition your position is an interpretation.

It is a logical conclusion, deduced from the facts.

To the listeners of His day the Scriptures did not necessarily coincident to what you consider the extent of the Tanach. Jews differed on these matters, and Palestinian and Diaspora Jews quite considerably. You cannot make a case for an evident Canon based on Christ's words.

On the contrary, I think the case *has* been made, and quite effectively, but I will let the reader judge.

If it requires interpolating, as you do, then it is a poor standard. Christ does not give poor standards, He provided a Church, which interpreted in His name and by His authority, as they did regarding whether the Mosaic law extent (Acts 15).

Much of Christ's teaching was in the form of parables, which by their nature were not immediately understood by many who heard them, and He was asked about this:

Mat 13:10 And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables?

Mat 13:11 He answered and said unto them, **Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.**

Mat 13:12 **For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath.**

Mat 13:13 **Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand.**

So what you are calling a poor standard was the *intentional* teaching method of Christ, used to divide sheep from goats.

As for the Decalogue, to list the commandments regarding man, (6 in Exodus, 7 in Deuteronomy), is still to give a partial list. The young man's question was which commandments must he keep to enter eternal life – apparently not those regarding God. Since that can't be true, Christ was giving a representative list. He didn't need to spell everything out because He did not leave His people at the mercy of their own private and incomplete interpretation of His words, but left them authoritative interpreters in His apostles, and those whom they appointed to succeed them as "overseers" (bishops) of the Church.

You are suggesting that in order for anyone to understand what Christ was referring to in Matt 19:18-19, it is necessary for everyone to consult with a priest simply because not every commandment was mentioned. Is this what the man did? Was the man in doubt, and in need of a priest to tell him what commandments were meant?

Mat 19:16 And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?

Mat 19:17 And he said unto him, **Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.**

Mat 19:18 He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, **Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness,**

Mat 19:19 Honour thy father and thy mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

Mat 19:20 The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet?

Obviously the man knew exactly what commandments Christ was referring to. He did not need the remaining commandments recited for clarity, so this passage actually speaks against your position.

As for Saturday or Sunday, your position entails the absurd contention that all early Christians, including the thousands of martyrs for Christ during the imperial persecutions, were in error in celebrating Sunday, that the disciples of Christ turn a left turn as soon as the apostles died, and everyone was in error until modern Sabbatarians came along. You are entitled to your position. However, please admit that it has as its basis only your church's 18 centuries after the fact interpretation of Scripture.

I would maintain that history shows there have always been those who kept the seventh day (Saturday) Sabbath, since the time of Christ, and that Sunday keeping only developed gradually over time, but was completely unknown to the Apostolic church.

Again, your claims to the self-evident meaning of Scripture, when you can drive a Volkswagen through the holes in your logic, begs the question of the correctness of your interpretation. YOU must prove, logically, syllogistically, your position, without "deus ex machina" filling in of the meaning. Literal words, not interpolations, please. I need not. Mine rests on the authority of the Apostolic Tradition. Scripture witnesses sufficiently to Catholic claims; witnesses, not proves. The Church like Christ speaks with authority, it doesn't proof-text. Peter, like Christ, is a stumbling stone (skandalon), upon which many rise or fall.

The strongest evidence that I can offer that you don't really believe that, that you have little confidence in your argument, is the censoring of my discussion from Fr. Echert's Scripture forum. This action is clearly intended to prevent Catholics from reading my essay on the Hebrew canon, because once they read and understand it, you will have a major credibility problem on your hands. Fr. Echert implied as much, when he said in his post of 19 July:

Not only did I delete your web address in the previous post but I have deleted your arguments in this post, which may mislead the Faithful who are in full communion with the Church.

So if my argument is full of holes, and this could be proved conclusively, you would undoubtedly be quite willing to set me straight before your EWTN Scripture Forum readers, so that what you believe to be the superior Traditions of the Roman Catholic Church could be exhibited publicly, and a Bible believing, commandment keeping Adventist, relying on the testimony of Jesus Christ, shown to be sadly misguided. Why don't you do that? I think your censorship of EWTN speaks louder than your words, that even in your own estimation people will clearly see that Jesus Christ endorsed the Hebrew Canon of the Old Testament, to the automatic exclusion of the Apocryphal books, thus proving the "infallible" Catholic Magisterium a myth, and that is why you cannot permit this discussion, or even a link to it, to be available on EWTN's scripture forum.

Again this is a public discussion, and this email and your reply, if any, will be posted on my web site.

Michael

Colin Donovan's Seventh Email - 6 August 2001

Its hard to fight categorical assertions based on the supplying of information where none exist. You could use a course in Aristotle's Analytics. Christ either gave a list or He didn't. He didn't. If He didn't then must He have intended an accepted Canon as He intended an

accepted Decalogue? There is no necessity there. The Decalogue was settled 1200 years earlier with Moses and was contained within recognized Scripture, the Torah. The books used in the synagogue, with which Jews would have been familiar, were the Torah, the Prophets and Psalms. The recognizability of His reference was clear, to liturgical use, not a settled canon. AND, among the various parties of Jews – Sadduces, Pharisees, Essenes - there were different opinions, as well. The Sadducees limited their canon to the Torah. Other books, not generally used in the synagogue, were later accepted by both Jews and Christians as Scripture. Both Eastern and Western Christians, that is Orthodox and Catholics, accepted a broader canon than rabbinical Jews, medieval descendants of the Pharisee party, who naturally accepted the Pharisee opinion from Jamnia. To canonize that post-Christian opinion as the mind of Christ, or even of Palestinian Jews of Christ's day, has no basis.

In the situation of the uncertain 1st century Canon Christ either told His apostles what it consisted in, or, He left it for the mission of the Holy Spirit in and through the Church, as was done in many other things, such as the applicability of the Mosaic Law to Christians (Acts 15). Clearly this is an unacceptable position for you, since it contradicts the Adventist theory of history that the whole Church went astray in the first century until Seventh Day Adventism came along. Well, that's a theory, and you are entitled to it. As you say, let your readers judge.

Thank you for an engaging dialogue. Since we tend to be repeating ourselves, I consider my part at an end. I'm sure you will turn that into a capitulation, instead of a recognition that we have gone about as far as we can go with it. But, do as you must.

God bless.

My Eighth Email to Colin Donovan - 12 August 2001

Mr. Donovan,

Regarding your email of 6 August:

Its hard to fight categorical assertions based on the supplying of information where none exist.

That you are having difficulty is apparent to everyone, but to the contrary, the information provided in my article is conclusive, and this is easily seen by most everyone. The beauty is its simplicity and clarity, and this is also what makes your attempts at rebuttal and obfuscation quite ineffective.

You could use a course in Aristotle's Analytics.

Presumably you have had such a course, and I would suggest that it has not helped you in this case. I think my study of scripture has served me better.

Christ either gave a list or He didn't. He didn't. If He didn't then must He have intended an accepted Canon as He intended an accepted Decalogue? There is no necessity there. The Decalogue was settled 1200 years earlier with Moses and was contained within recognized Scripture, the Torah. The books used in the synagogue, with which Jews would have been familiar, were the Torah, the Prophets and Psalms. The recognizability of His reference was clear, to liturgical use, not a settled canon. AND, among the various parties of Jews – Sadducees, Pharisees, Essenes - there were different opinions, as well. The Sadducees limited their canon to the Torah. Other books, not generally used in the synagogue, were later accepted by both Jews and Christians as Scripture. Both Eastern and Western Christians, that is Orthodox and Catholics, accepted a broader canon than rabbinical Jews, medieval descendants of the Pharisee party, who naturally accepted the Pharisee opinion from Jamnia. To canonize that post-Christian opinion as the mind of Christ, or even of Palestinian Jews of Christ's day, has no basis.

In the situation of the uncertain 1st century Canon Christ either told His apostles what it consisted in, or, He left it for the mission of the Holy Spirit in and through the Church, as was done in many other things, such as the applicability of the Mosaic Law to Christians (Acts 15).

Again, if you believed that argument a sufficient rebuttal, my discussion would never have been censored from EWTN. Your absolute lack of confidence in that argument is self-evident in your unwillingness to let EWTN readers have access to my essay and this discussion.

Clearly this is an unacceptable position for you, since it contradicts the Adventist theory of history that the whole Church went astray in the first century until Seventh Day Adventism came along. Well, that's a theory, and you are entitled to it. As you say, let your readers judge.

Scripture warns repeatedly of apostasy entering into the church, even in the apostolic era of the church, and it is plain that this apostasy would soon overwhelm the church at large, developing into the Antichrist power described as the little horn of Daniel, the beast from the sea in Revelation 13, and persecuting harlot riding the beast in Revelation 17. The following passages are warnings of the inevitable apostasy in the church:

Amos 8:11 Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD:
Amos 8:12 And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, and shall not find it.

Mat 7:15 Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.

Mat 24:11 And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.

Acts 20:28 Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

Acts 20:29 For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.

Acts 20:30 Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.

Acts 20:31 Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.

Gal 1:6 I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel:

Gal 1:7 Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.

Gal 1:8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.

Gal 1:9 As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.

2 Th 2:3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;

2 Th 2:4 Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.

1 Tim 4:1 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;

1 Tim 4:2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;

2 Tim 4:3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;

2 Tim 4:4 And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

2 Pet 2:1 But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.

2 Pet 2:2 And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.

Jude 1:3 Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.

Jude 1:4 For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

Rev 2:4 Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.

Rev 2:5 Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.

Rev 2:20 Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.

Rev 2:21 And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not.

Rev 2:22 Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds.

Rev 2:23 And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.

Now, contrary to these scriptures, the Catholic Church teaches that it has been protected from apostasy, that it has never taught error, and never will teach error. This notion of an infallible Catholic Magisterium is not taught anywhere in scripture, and as my essay shows, it is proved a pious fraud on the point of the Hebrew canon being endorsed by Jesus Christ.

Thank you for an engaging dialogue. Since we tend to be repeating ourselves, I consider my part at an end. I'm sure you will turn that into a capitulation, instead of a recognition that we have gone about as far as we can with it. But, do as you must.

I am quite confident that my essay stands unimpeached by your attempts at rebuttal. It is your censorship at EWTN that most everyone will interpret as a capitulation on your part. Truth has the courage to be public, because it will surely stand up to any test. Error flees

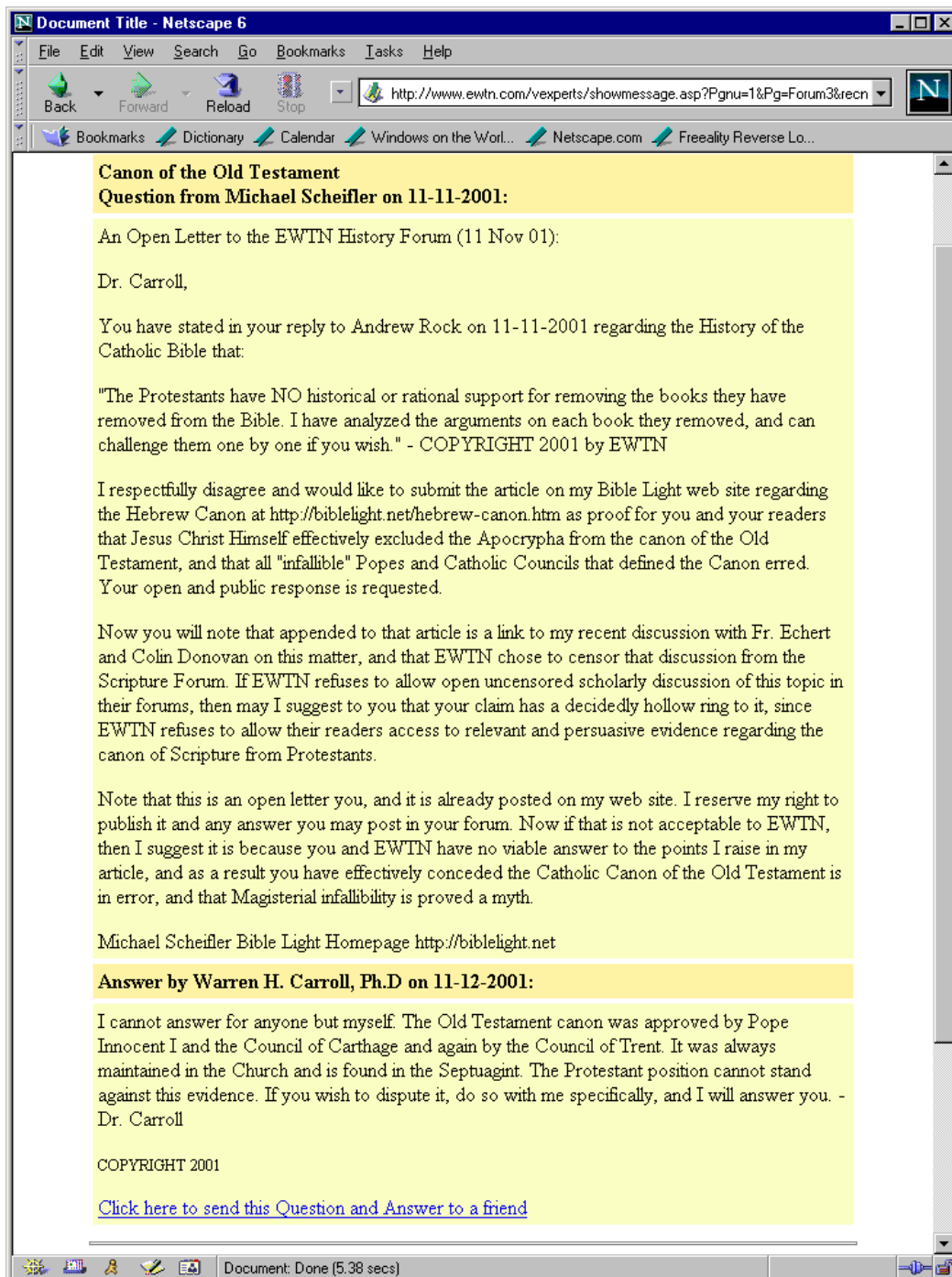
from public examination, because it cannot stand up under scrutiny. So your own actions are your strongest critic and speak louder than your words.

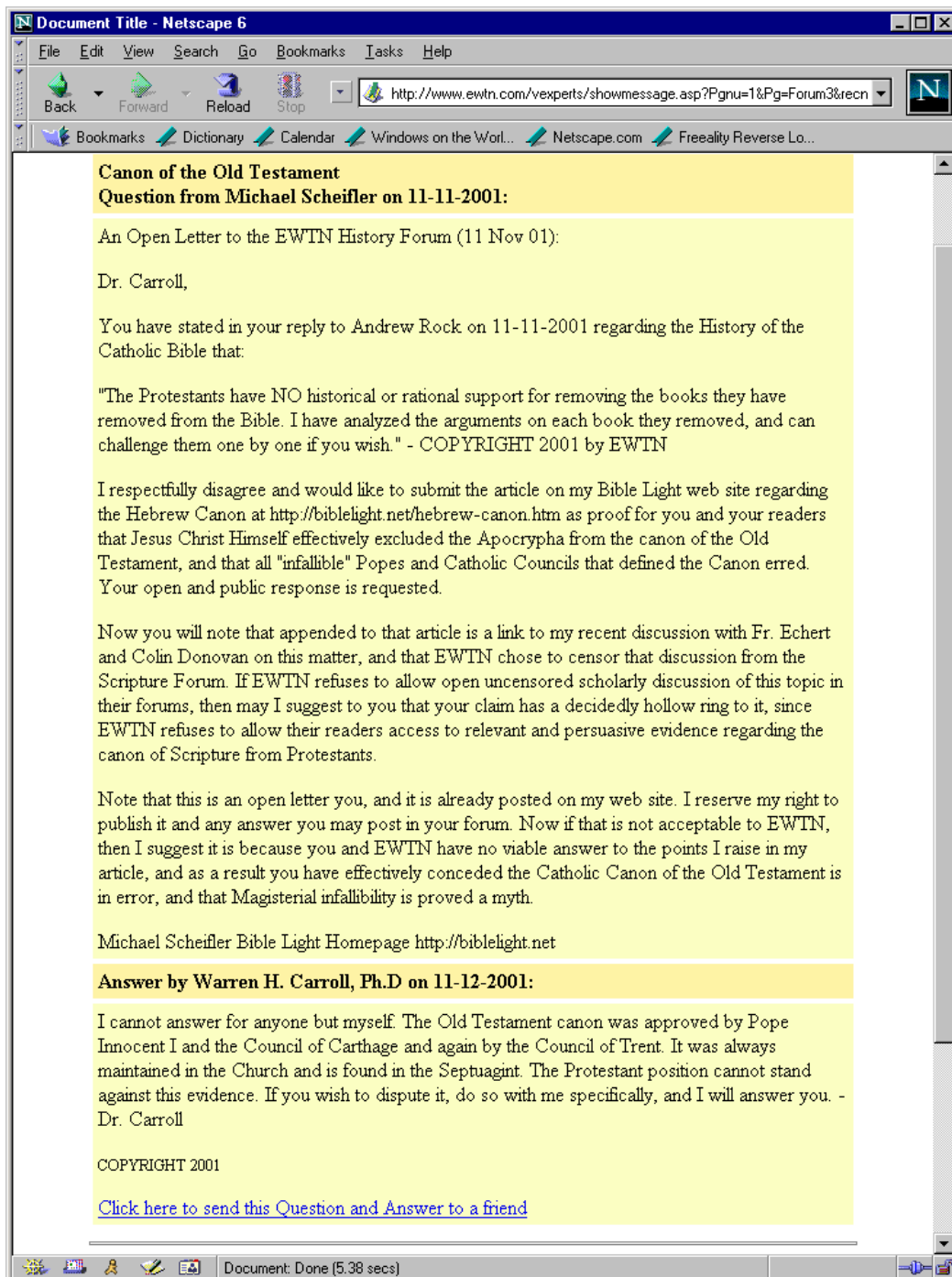
Again this is a public discussion, and this email and your reply, if any, will be posted on my web site.

Michael



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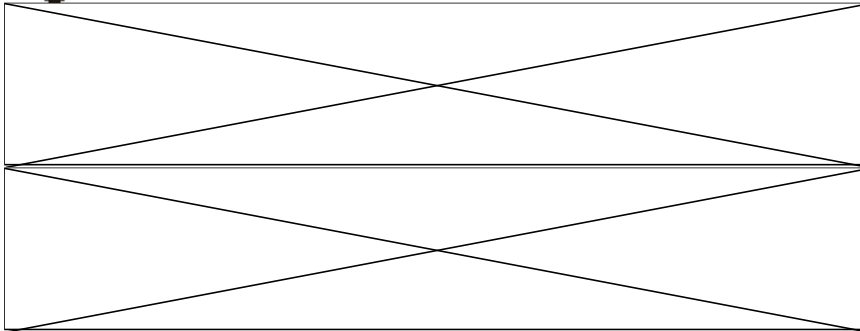
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his article will be imported to the new website format shortly. In the meantime, you may view the archived file here:

Sometime ago, Mr. Scheifler wrote an [article on the Hebrew Canon](#). I took the opportunity to respond to three of his arguments in my piece [Are Deuterocanonical books part of the Bible?](#). Recently,

Mr. Scheifler has offered his own [rebuttal](#) to my original response. The following piece therefore represents my latest, revised response. Mr. Scheifler's comments will be in **red**.

Mr. Scheifler opposed my assertion that the canon of the Old Testament in Jesus' time was still open-ended. In his rebuttal, he first tried by citing a series of verses to convince his readers that the phrase "the Law and the Prophets" or "Moses and the Prophets" or "the Law of Moses, the Prophets and Psalms" or "Scripture" refers to the 39 books in the Protestant Old Testament (or 24 books of the Jewish Scripture.) However, the Jewish Scripture has three divisions: the Law (Torah), The Prophets (Nevim) and the Writings (Ketuvim). Thus, the phrase "the Law (or Moses) and the Prophets" refers only to the first two divisions, not the whole Jewish Scripture [1]. The New Testament never applies the complete phrase "the Law, the Prophets and the Writings" to the Scripture in Jesus' time. The closest reference to the three divisions of the Jewish Scripture in the New Testament comes from Luke 24:44 which says "the Law of Moses, the Prophets and Psalms", of which Mr. Scheifler wrote "**he [Jesus] means every book of the Old Testament.**" The problem with his argument is that there is support neither from the New Testament nor from any Jewish source to suggest that naming one book means including the rest. The whole Law is never represented by Genesis and all of the Prophets is never represented by Joshua. **Likewise, then, the Psalms does not represent all of the Writings!** Thus, if anything, Luke 24:44 further supports my contention that *only* the first two divisions of the Jewish Scripture were closed in Jesus' time, and certainly not the "Writings". (We will return to Luke 24:44 later to see what Jesus really meant.) Moreover, the absence of any citation in the New Testament from a number of books of the third division (Esther, Song of Songs, Ecclesiastes, Ezra and Nehemiah) gives further support that the canon was still open-ended in that time. Even a neutral Jewish source states that it remained open-ended until the second century after the birth of Our Lord:

On the other hand, there is **plenty of evidence** to show that the collection of the Ketuvim as a whole, as well as some individual books within it, **was not accepted as being finally closed until well into the second century c.e.**

As noted above, **the practice of calling the entire Scriptures the "Torah and Prophets" presupposes a considerable lapse of time between the canonization of the second and third parts of the Bible. The fact that the last division had no fixed name points in the same direction.** Even the finally adopted designation "Ketuvim" is indeterminate, since it is also used in Rabbinic Hebrew in the two senses of the Scriptures in general and in individual texts in particular.

Encyclopedia Judaica Vol. 4, page 824 (emphasis added)

On page 825 the same encyclopedia says that some still cited Sirach as Scripture and as part of Ketuvim in the second century, even after the rabbis declared it uncanonical.

Does the term "Scripture" refer to all 39 books of a Protestant's Old Testament, as Mr. Scheifler contends? The accepted books of the Law (or any book of the Prophets, for that matter) were certainly **not** "shelved" just because all of the other inspired books were not yet written or canonized before Jesus and others could refer to them as Scripture! For example, in the *first* year of the reign of Darius (Daniel 9:2), Daniel already read Jeremiah as the Word of the Lord. He did not need to wait until the prophets Haggai and Zechariah who received the word of the Lord in the *second* year of Darius reign (Haggai 1:1,

Zechariah 1:1), wrote their books and/or until the Book of Daniel itself was written (some say it was written in c. 170 BC) to be recognized as Scripture. Thus, the term *Scripture* and the phrase "all the Scriptures" in Luke 24:27 refers only to those who were already accepted in that time. Later, Christians extended the canon to include books of both Old and New Testaments, none of the latter were written in Jesus' time.

Mr. Scheifler also referred to 2 Corinthians 3:14 as a proof that the Old Testament was already defined, but he failed to acknowledge the impact of the very next verse. 2 Corinthians 3:14-15 of KJV, translates the Greek word "diatheke" as "testament" (other translations prefer "covenant")

But their minds were blinded: for until this day **remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the old testament**; which vail is done away in Christ.

But even unto this day, **when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart** (2 Corinthians 3:14-15).

The translated phrase "old testament" does not refer to list of books known to us as the Old Testament but to the old covenant of Law from Moses. If Mr. Scheifler insists that it does, then his "Old Testament" should comprise five books of Moses, as verse 15 indicates. For further support that his interpretation of 2 Corinthians 3:14 is wrong, let's look at 2 Corinthians 3:6 (KJV, emphasis mine)

Who also hath made us able ministers of the **new testament**; **not of the letter, but of the spirit**: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. (2 Corinthians 3:6)

Did Paul here equate "new testament" with 27 books of our New Testament? When Paul wrote 2 Corinthians, a number of the current canonical books were not even written yet! Note also the phrase "not of the letter, but of the spirit": does it represent books of the New Testament? Thus, the Greek word diatheke is to be understood as covenant, not as canonized list of inspired books.

In relation to my statement that the Septuagint also has "the Law and the Prophets", Mr. Scheifler wrote "**Are the same books of the Law and the Prophets of the Hebrew Canon also found in the Septuagint? Yes, they most certainly are. However, the Septuagint has never had the identical division and grouping of the Hebrew Canon into the Law and Prophets (and Writings), which is what the above statement seeks to conceal from the reader.**" In my articles on [the Bible](#) and on [the canon of the Old Testament](#), I explained that the Septuagint (or LXX) has four divisions: the Law, Historical books, Poetical books and the Prophets. Thus, the LXX does have the Law and the Prophets in its four divisions. The Law of LXX has five books of Moses but its Prophets is longer and includes Daniel, which, in the Jewish Scripture, belongs to the third division.

Now let's see whether there is a possibility that Jesus referred to the LXX in Luke 24:44. In Luke 24:44, Jesus clearly stated that He fulfilled everything in "the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms" concerning Himself. Suppose Jesus followed the Jewish Scripture's three-fold division, other than Psalms and Daniel, is there any reference to Jesus in the rest of the Writings (Proverbs, Job, Ruth, Lamentations, Song of Songs, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles)?[2].

Jesus said that He fulfilled everything written in the Law, Prophets and Psalms. Psalms is one book of the third division of the Jewish scriptures. The third division or the Writings (Ketuvim) also includes Daniel. In other places, Jesus quoted prophecies in Daniel to refer to Himself; so it is strange that He did not include Daniel in Luke 24:44. Thus, while Mr. Scheifler says that Psalms represents all books of the Writings including Daniel, in Luke 24:44 Jesus may be placing Daniel as one book of the Prophets. If He did so, then He followed the LXX divisions, which thereby nullifies Mr. Scheifler's argument.

Obviously, Mr. Scheifler denies this fact since he says: "There is absolutely nothing in the cited verses that in any way indicate that Christ was endorsing the canon of any version of the Septuagint (the three oldest versions of the Septuagint all differ in the books they include, and their sequence!), much less indicating the placement of the book of Daniel. To suggest that Jesus was referring to the Septuagint is to say that black may in fact really be white." However, what I wrote is that "it may indicate that Christ followed LXX grouping", not that He endorsed the LXX as a canon of the Old Testament. There is no evidence that He or His apostles gave us the list of inspired books. Had they done so, then Christians from the very beginning would agree which books were inspired, which was not the case. Mr. Scheifler is right to say that the order and number of books in the LXX differ according to different manuscripts. As for different sequence or order, even books of the Latter Prophets and Writings of the Jewish Scripture had different ordering in the past [3]. All the three manuscripts of the LXX (Vaticanus, Sinaiticus and Alexandrinus) shown in his essay on the [Hebrew Canon](#) has Daniel as one book of the Prophets. According to the first century AD testimony of Josephus, the Jewish Scripture had three divisions: the Law (5 books), the Prophets (13 books) and Hymns & Moral Precepts (4 books). He did not name the books but this three division (which differs from the present Jewish Scripture) it is likely he placed Daniel as one of the Prophets.

Let's move to the next part of Mr. Scheifler's rebuttal where he tried to interpret the phrase "from Abel to Zechariah, son of *Berechiah*" in Matthew 23:35 to mean "from Genesis to Chronicles". His interpretation (the standard among Protestants) would be wrong if either one or both of the following is true: (1) Zechariah, son of Jehoiada of 2 Chronicles was not the one Jesus meant; (2) Chronicles was not the last book of the Jewish Scripture in Jesus' time. Granted, most commentaries (including [The Catholic Encyclopedia](#)) favour the position that Zechariah of 2 Chronicles was the one Jesus meant. A few scholars have proposed the prophet Zachariah, the son of *Berechiah* and who, together with Haggai and Malachi, were the *last* Jewish prophets [4]. The Bible is silent in how and where he died [5]. Now let's see whether in Jesus' time there is any evidence that Chronicles was the last book. When I pointed out that the order of books could not be clearly defined, Mr. Scheifler became rather frustrated. He wrote: "The above is nothing but an attempt to muddy the waters, to obfuscate the truth and dissipate any understanding of the clear intention of the words of Christ." Mr. Scheifler cannot deny that Chronicles was not *always* the last book of the Jewish Scripture. He tried to minimize the impact by writing "placing Chronicles as the first book of the third division, is not particularly significant." But, as he well knows, it is significant since it will jeopardize his interpretation of Matthew 23:35. If Chronicles was not always the last book of the Jewish Scripture, then there is no guarantee that it was so in Jesus' time (provided the order of scrolls could be defined). Mr. Scheifler went on to write: "modern reprints of the Leningrad Codex have moved the book of Chronicles back to its traditional place at the end of the Ketuvim." The

fact that they did so does not change the location of Chronicles as the first book of the third division in the *original* Leningrad Codex. Five out of eight ancient arrangement of books of the Writings have Chronicles as the last book, including the earliest known, dated end of 2nd century AD [6]. Even earlier, however, is the first century AD testimony of Josephus (in the preceding paragraph) where Chronicles cannot belong to the third division (Hymns and Moral Precepts), let alone become its last book. In conclusion, therefore, with respect to Matthew 23:35 or Luke 11:51, Jesus had no intention to tell us the limit of the Old Testament canon.

Near the end of his rebuttal Mr. Scheifler wrote "The assertion that the Old Testament canon was still open-ended in apostolic times is flatly contradicted by the collective words of Christ in Matthew 23:35, Luke 11:51, and Luke 24:44, which firmly and unequivocally endorse the content, ordering and divisions of only the Hebrew canon." If he still insists that the canon of the Old Testament was already closed in apostolic times, then he should be able to explain why the New Testament still cites sources from outside the 39 books of his Old Testament. Examples include Jude 9 and 14-16; 2 Peter 2:22 places Proverb 26:11 *on par* with a proverb from outside the Bible. The common reply is that they are not cited as Scripture, but how do we draw a line between what is cited as Scripture and what is not cited as Scripture? John 7:38 and James 4:5 have the phrase "Scripture says" but we cannot identify from whence they come. Paul text in 1 Corinthians 2:9 is preceded with the phrase "it is written" but it only resembles Isaiah 64:4.

About the deuterocanonical books, Mr. Scheifler wrote "The deuter/apocryphal books, while written by Jews, were never universally accepted as canonical by the majority of the Jewish community." Yet, the Jews also universally rejected Jesus as the Messiah, since there is no reason for them to accept the decision of the Church on the canon of the Bible. In relation to Romans 3:2 in his essay on the [Hebrew canon](#), Mr. Scheifler wrote "As the designated custodians of the inspired word of God, they knew which books were canonical, and which were not, and they knew this *without* the assistance of the yet to appear Catholic Church." Whilst they did define their canon of 24 books (equal to 39 books of Protestant Bible), it was done after the time of Christ (admitted even by a Jewish source like the [Encyclopedia Judaica](#)). Christians are not obliged to follow a Jewish Council, especially considering what Jesus taught through His parable of the vineyard's tenants in Matthew 21:33-41.

Finally, together with all Protestants, Mr. Scheifler rejects the authority of the Church in determining the canon of the Bible. He wrote: "It can be concluded with confidence, from the words of Christ cited, that every Roman Catholic council that defined the canon, including the allegedly infallible declaration of the Council of Trent, was in error, and every Catholic Bible printed contains non-canonical apocryphal books that are not a part of the inspired Old Testament." If Mr. Scheifler rejects the authority of the Church, then how does he know that his New Testament has twenty-seven books? Did Jesus and/or any of His apostles tell him that *all* of them are inspired?

[Mr. Scheifler reply](#)

(appended to his rebuttal at the bottom)

In his reply Mr. Scheifler attempted to make my statement contradict a statement of the Pontifical Bible Commission in their work: [The Jewish People and Their Sacred Scriptures in the Christian Bible](#).

According to Mr. Scheifler the Pontifical Bible Commission agrees with him that the phrase "the Law of Moses, the Prophet and Psalms" or "the Law and the Prophets" means *all* 39 books of his Old Testament. He wrote: "**The Pontifical Bible Commission, in context, apparently considers Luke 24:44 to refer to the whole of the Hebrew Old Testament - "all the Scriptures" (Lk 24:27), and does not specifically exclude any of the other books of the third division that begins with Psalms. Perhaps Mr. Hartono should write the commission and inform them of their misinterpretation.**" Let's see whether the Pontifical Bible Commission believes so in the following (emphasis mine):

The Extension of the Canon of Scripture

1. In Judaism

..... It now seems more probable that **at the time of Christianity's birth, closed collections of the Law and the Prophets existed in a textual form substantially identical with the Old Testament. The collection of "Writings", on the other hand, was not as well defined** either in Palestine or in the Jewish diaspora, **with regard to the number of books and their textual form**. Towards the end of the first century A.D., it seems that 2422 [24/22] books were generally accepted **by Jews** as sacred, but it is only much later that the list became exclusive. When the limits of the Hebrew canon were fixed, the deuterocanonical books were not included.

Many of the books belonging to the third group of religious texts, not yet fixed, were regularly read in Jewish communities during the first century A.D. They were translated into Greek and circulated among Hellenistic Jews, both in Palestine and in the diaspora.

2. In the Early Church

Since the first Christians were for the most part Palestinian Jews, either "Hebrew" or "Hellenistic" (cf. Ac 6:1), their views on Scripture would have reflected those of their environment, but we are poorly informed on the subject. **Nevertheless, the writings of the New Testament suggest that a sacred literature wider than the Hebrew canon circulated in Christian communities.** Generally, the authors of the New Testament manifest a knowledge of the deuterocanonical books and other non-canonical ones since **the number of books cited in the New Testament exceeds not only the Hebrew canon, but also the so-called Alexandrian canon.**

Thus, the substance of my comments about the canon of the Old Testament being open-ended (i.e. only the Law and the Prophets were accepted and the limit of Writings was not defined) is in complete harmony with what the Pontifical Bible Commission wrote. Their statement indicates that the Writings also *includes* books that were later translated into Greek and circulated among Hellenistic Jews in diaspora. They also state that the New Testament even cites sources from outside the (Catholic) Old

Testament. In the event that I am wrong in interpreting Luke 24:44, and Psalms indeed represent the whole Writings, then the Scripture referred as "the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms", according to the Pontifical Bible Commission, is STILL not limited to the 24 books of the Jewish Scripture.

Did the Pontifical Bible Commission believe that the term "old testament" in 2 Corinthians 3:14 refer to 24 books of the Jewish Scripture? Mr. Scheifler thought so when he wrote "In context, the Pontifical Biblical Commission is clearly interpreting 2 Cor. 3:14 to mean the *entire Old Testament of the Jews, and not just the Old Covenant Law from Moses. Again, it seems that Mr. Hartono should inform Rome of their error.*" On the contrary, Mr. Scheifler did not pay attention on what the PBC wrote (emphasis mine), which ironically he also quoted (and emphasized) in his reply.

THE SACRED SCRIPTURES OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE ARE A FUNDAMENTAL PART OF THE CHRISTIAN Bible

A perennial manifestation of this link to their beginnings is the acceptance by Christians of the Sacred Scriptures of the Jewish people as the Word of God addressed to themselves as well. Indeed, **the Church has accepted as inspired by God** all the writings contained in the **Hebrew Bible** as well as those in the **Greek Bible**. The title "**Old Testament**" given to this collection of writings is **an expression coined by the apostle Paul** to designate **the writings attributed to Moses (cf. 2 Co 3:14-15)**. Its scope has been **extended, since the end of the second century, to include other Jewish writings in Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek.**

Their statement indicates that when Paul wrote 2 Corinthians, the term "old testament (covenant)" meant *only* the five books of Moses. Since the end of second century (*after the apostolic time*) Christians, not Paul, have extended the term "Old Testament" to include other books in Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek. Mr. Scheifler apparently failed to see the phrase "Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek books", which includes not only the rest of protocanonical books but other books as well. Finally, Mr. Scheifler wrote "**Or, are Roman Catholics free to give their own private interpretations regarding Scripture, even if it contradicts Magisterial teaching?**" I would like to assure him that if what I wrote contradicts the Magisterial teaching of the Catholic Church, I will humbly withdraw it. As any fair reader can ascertain, however, it is Mr. Scheifler who is in error here.

In any case, if I were a Seventh Day Adventist like Mr. Scheifler, then I would not try to find support from the Pontifical Bible Commission; he has simply wasted his time as they will never support his position that the Old Testament comprises only the 39 books of the Protestant Old Testament Canon.

[1] Melito, bishop of Sardis (in present day Turkey) in c. 170 AD referred the Old Testament as "the Law and the Prophets". His list of Old Testament has only those two divisions. The Law (of Moses) has 19

books and comprises 5 books of Moses, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, four Kingdoms (Samuel and Kings), two Chronicles, Psalms, Proverb, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs and Job. The Prophets has 6 books and comprises Isaiah, Jeremiah, the Twelve Minor Prophets, Daniel, Ezekiel and Esdras (Ezra-Nehemiah). Lamentations is traditionally combined with Jeremiah but Esther and deuterocanonical books are not included. It may look strange that he attributed to Moses books like Psalms etc., however in John 10:34 Psalms was considered as part of the Law, but so was Isaiah 28:11-12 in 1 Corinthians 14:21. The fact that Melito went to the east (i.e. Palestine) before he prepared his list shows that even in the end of second century AD, there was still a diversity in the number of both division and books of the Old Testament.

[2] In his book, "The New Evidence that Demands a Verdict" (1999), Protestant apologist Josh McDowell dedicated Chapter 8, pages 164 to 202 to list and to explain all reference to Jesus in the Jewish Scripture (Protestant Old Testament). Other than Psalms and Daniel, the other references in Writings are 1 Chronicles 17:11-14, which has parallel in 2 Samuel 7:12-16 (of the Prophets). For the rest, he has references in the Law (Genesis, Numbers and Deuteronomy) and in the Prophets (Samuel, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Micah, Zechariah, Malachi).

[3] Encyclopedia Judaica, Vol. 4, pages 828-830.

[4] Other candidates are Zechariah, the father of John the Baptist and, following Josephus, Zechariah son of *Baruch* or *Baris* who was murdered by the Zealots in the temple in c. 68 AD.

[5] The New American Commentary, Vol. 22, page 349 refers to a paper, Blank, S.H. (1937-8): The Death of Zechariah in Rabbinic Literature, *Hebrew Union College Annual*, Vol. 12-13, pages 327-346. The author refers to a comment on Targum to Lamentations 2.20 saying that prophet Zechariah, son of Iddo, the High Priest, was murdered in the sanctuary of the Lord on the day of Atonement.

[6] Encyclopedia Judaica, Vol. 4, pages 827. It is not a manuscript of the Jewish Scripture but a quotation from *baraita* in the Babylonian Talmud, tractate Baba Bathra 14b.

Our Rabbis taught: the order of the Prophets is Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Isaiah, and the Twelve; The order of the Ketuvim is Ruth, the Book of Psalms, Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, the Song of Songs, Lamentations, Daniel, the Scroll of Esther, Ezra and Chronicles.



Wibisono Hartono

THE CATHOLIC LEGATE

September 7, 2002

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The Council of Trent

The Fourth Session

*The canons and decrees of the sacred
and oecumenical Council of Trent,*

Trans. J. Waterworth (London: Dolman, 1848), 17-19.

[Hanover Historical Texts Project](#)

Scanned by Hanover College students in 1995.

The page numbers of Waterworth's translation appear in brackets.

[Page 17]

SESSION THE FOURTH

Celebrated on the eighth day of the month of April, in the year MDXLVI.

DECREE CONCERNING THE CANONICAL SCRIPTURES

The sacred and holy, ecumenical, and general Synod of Trent,--lawfully assembled in the Holy Ghost, the Same three legates of the Apostolic Sec presiding therein,--keeping this [Page 18] always in view, that, errors being removed, the purity itself of the Gospel be preserved in the Church; which (Gospel), before promised through the prophets in the holy Scriptures, our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, first promulgated with His own mouth, and then commanded to be preached by His Apostles to every creature, as the fountain of all, both saving truth, and moral discipline; and seeing clearly that this truth and discipline are contained in the written books, and the unwritten traditions which, received by the Apostles from the mouth of Christ himself, or from the Apostles themselves, the Holy Ghost dictating, have come down even unto us, transmitted as it were from hand to hand; (the Synod) following the examples of the orthodox Fathers, receives and venerates with an equal affection of piety, and reverence, all the books both of the Old and of the New Testament--seeing that one God is the author of both --as also the said traditions, as well those appertaining to faith as to morals, as having been dictated, either by Christ's own word of mouth, or by the Holy Ghost, and preserved in the Catholic Church by a continuous succession. And it has thought it meet that a list of the sacred books be inserted in this decree, lest a doubt may arise in any one's mind, which are the books that are received by this Synod. They are as set down here below: of the Old Testament: the five books of Moses, to wit, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy; Josue, Judges, Ruth, four books of Kings, two of Paralipomenon, the first book of Esdras, and the second which is entitled

Nehemias; Tobias, Judith, Esther, Job, the Davidical Psalter, consisting of a hundred and fifty psalms; the Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, the Canticle of Canticles, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Isaias, Jeremias, with Baruch; Ezechiel, Daniel; the twelve minor prophets, to wit, Osee, Joel, Amos, Abdias, Jonas, Micheas, Nahum, Habacuc, Sophonias, Aggaeus, Zacharias, Malachias; two books of the Machabees, the first and the second. Of the New Testament: the four Gospels, according [**Page 19**] to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John; the Acts of the Apostles written by Luke the Evangelist; fourteen epistles of Paul the apostle, (one) to the Romans, two to the Corinthians, (one) to the Galatians, to the Ephesians, to the Philippians, to the Colossians, two to the Thessalonians, two to Timothy, (one) to Titus, to Philemon, to the Hebrews; two of Peter the apostle, three of John the apostle, one of the apostle James, one of Jude the apostle, and the Apocalypse of John the apostle. But if any one receive not, as sacred and canonical, the said books entire with all their parts, as they have been used to be read in the Catholic Church, and as they are contained in the old Latin vulgate edition; and knowingly and deliberately contemn the traditions aforesaid; let him be anathema. Let all, therefore, understand, in what order, and in what manner, the said Synod, after having laid the foundation of the Confession of faith, will proceed, and what testimonies and authorities (Praesidiis.) it will mainly use in confirming dogmas, and in restoring morals in the Church.

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NPNF2-14. The Seven Ecumenical Councils

Canon LX.

[*N. B.—This Canon is of most questionable genuineness.*]

These are all the books of Old Testament appointed to be read: 1, Genesis of the world; 2, The Exodus from Egypt; 3, Leviticus; 4, Numbers; 5, Deuteronomy; 6, Joshua, the son of Nun; 7, Judges, Ruth; 8, Esther; 9, Of the Kings, First and Second; 10, Of the Kings, Third and Fourth; 11, Chronicles, First and Second; 12, Esdras, First and Second; 13, The Book of Psalms; 14, The Proverbs of Solomon; 15, Ecclesiastes; 16, The Song of Songs; 17, Job; 18, The Twelve Prophets; 19, Isaiah; 20, Jeremiah, and Baruch, the Lamentations, and the Epistle; 21, Ezekiel; 22, Daniel.

And these are the books of the New Testament: Four Gospels, according to Matthew, Mark, Luke and John; The Acts of the Apostles; Seven Catholic Epistles, to wit, one of James, two of Peter, three of John, one of Jude; Fourteen Epistles of Paul, one to the Romans, two to the Corinthians, one to the Galatians, one to the Ephesians, one to the Philippians, one to the Colossians, two to the Thessalonians, one to the Hebrews, two to Timothy, one to Titus, and one to Philemon.

Notes.

Ancient Epitome of Canon LX.

But of the new, the four Gospels—of Matthew, of Mark, of Luke, of John; Acts; Seven Catholic epistles, viz. of James one, of Peter two, of John three, of Jude one; of Paul fourteen, viz.: to the Romans one, to the Corinthians two, to the Galatians one, to the Ephesians one, to the Phillipians one, to the Colossians one, to the Thessalonians two, to the Hebrews one, to Timothy two, to Titus one, and to Philemon one.

It will be noticed that while this canon has often been used for controversial purposes it really has little or no value in this connexion, for the absence of the Revelation of St. John from the New Testament to all orthodox Christians is, to say the least, as fatal to its reception as an ecumenical definition of the canon of Holy Scripture, as the absence of the book of Wisdom, etc., from the Old Testament is to its reception by those who accept the books of what we may call for convenience the Greek canon, as distinguished from the Hebrew, as canonical.

We may therefore leave this question wholly out of account, and merely consider the matter from the evidence we possess.

In 1777 Spittler published a special treatise¹⁹⁹ to shew that the list of scriptural books was no part of the original canon adopted by Laodicea. Hefele gives the following resume of his argument:²⁰⁰

(a) That Dionysius Exiguus has not this canon in his translation of the Laodicean decrees. It might, indeed, be said with Dallæus and Van Espen, that Dionysius omitted this list of the books of Scripture because in Rome, where he composed his work, another by Innocent I. was in general use.

(b) But, apart from the fact that Dionysius is always a most faithful translator, this sixtieth canon is also omitted by John of Antioch, one of the most esteemed and oldest Greek collectors of canons, who could have had no such reasons as Dionysius for his omission.

(c) Lastly, Bishop Martin of Braga in the sixth century, though he has the fifty-ninth, has also not included in his collection the sixtieth canon so nearly related to it, nor does the Isidorian translation appear at first to have ¹⁶⁰had this canon.²⁰¹ Herbst, in the *Tübingen Review*, also accedes to these arguments of Spittler's, as did Fuchs and others before him. Mr. Ffoulkes in his article on the Council of Laodicea in Smith and Cheetham's *Dictionary of Christian Antiquities* at length attempts to refute all objections, and affirms the genuineness of the list, but his conclusions can hardly be accepted when the careful consideration and discussion of the matter by Bishop Westcott is kept in mind. (*History of the Canon of the New Testament*, III^d. Period, chapter ii. [p. 428 of the 4th Edition.])

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Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der Altchristlichen Literatur 38.4 (1912)

THE 'DECRETUM GELASIANUM DE LIBRIS RECIPIENDIS ET NON RECIPIENDIS' 

(English translation - [RP](#), part V checked against Hennecke-Schneemelcher I p.38-40.)

Ernst von Dobschütz

HERE BEGINS THE COUNCIL OF ROME UNDER POPE DAMASUS "ON EXPLAINING THE FAITH"

I. It was said:

1. Firstly the seven-fold Spirit which remains in Christ should be discussed:

the spirit of wisdom: 'Christ the power and wisdom of God'.

the spirit of understanding: 'I will give you understanding, and I will instruct you in the way you will go'.

the spirit of counsel: 'And his name is called the messenger of great counsel'.

the spirit of virtues: as above, 'The power of God and the wisdom of God'.

the spirit of knowledge: 'Because of the eminence of the knowledge of the apostle of Christ Jesus'.

the spirit of truth: 'I am the way the life and the truth'.

the spirit of the fear of God: 'The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom'.

2. However the dispensation of Christ has a name of many forms:

God, who is spirit;

the word, who is God;

the Son, who is only-begotten of the Father;

the man, who was born of the virgin;

the priest, who offered himself as a sacrifice;

the shepherd, who is the guard;

the worm, who rose from the dead;

the mountain, which is strong;

the way, which is straight;

the harbour, which one may pass through into life;

the lamb, which was slain;

the stone, which is the cornerstone;

the master, who is the bringer of life;

the sun, which is the illuminator;

the true, which is of the Father;

the life, which is the creator;

the bread, which is dear;

the Samaritan, who is the guard and the merciful;
the Christ, who is the anointed one;
Jesus, who is the saviour;
God, who is from God;
the messenger, who was sent;
the bridegroom, who is the mediator;
the vine, by whose own blood we are redeemed;
the lion, who is king;
the rock, which is the foundation;
the flower, which is chosen;
the prophet, who revealed the future.

3. For the Holy Spirit is not of the Father only or of the Son only, but of the Father and the Son; for it is written: 'He who delights in the world, the Spirit of the Father is not in him'; again it is written; 'However anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ, does not belong to him'. So the Holy Spirit is understood to be called of the Father and the Son, [and] of whom the Son himself in the gospel says that the Holy Spirit 'proceeds from the Father' and 'he will receive from me and he will make known to you'.

II. Likewise it was said:

Now indeed the issue of the divine scriptures must be discussed, which the universal Catholic church receives or which it is required to avoid.

1. THIS IS THE ORDER OF THE OLD TESTAMENT:

Genesis	one book
Exodus	one book
Leviticus	one book
Numbers	one book
Deuteronomy	one book
Joshua	one book
Judges	one book
Ruth	one book
Kings	four books
Chronicles	two books
150 Psalms	one book
Three books of Solomon	
proverbs	one book
ecclesiastes	one book
song of songs	one book

The same of Wisdom	one book
ecclesiasticus	one book

2. LIKEWISE THE ORDER OF THE PROPHETS:

Isaiah	one book
Jeremiah	one book
with Cinoth i.e. his lamentations	
Ezechiel	one book
Daniel	one book
Hosea	one book
Amos	one book
Micah	one book
Joel	one book
Obadiah	one book
Jonah	one book
Nahum	one book
Habbakuk	one book
Zephaniah	one book
Haggai	one book
Zechariah	one book
Malachi	one book

3. LIKEWISE THE ORDER OF THE HISTORIES:

Job	one book
Tobit	one book
Esdras	two books
Ester	one book
Judith	one book
Maccabees	two books

4. LIKEWISE THE ORDER OF THE SCRIPTURES OF THE NEW TESTAMENT which the holy and catholic Roman church upholds and is venerated:

Four books of the Gospels	
according to Mathew	one book

according to Mark	one book
according to Luke	one book
according to John	one book
Likewise the acts of the apostles	one book
The letters of the apostle Paul in number fourteen	
to the Romans	one letter
to the Corinthians	two letters
to the Ephesians	one letter
to the Thesalonians	two letters
to the Galatians	one letter
to the Philippians	one letter
to the Colossians	one letter
to Timothy	two letters
to Titus	one letter
to the Philemon	one letter
to the Hebrews	one letter
Likewise the apocalypse of John	one book
Likewise the canonical [catholic] letters in number seven	
of the apostle Peter	two letters
of the apostle James	one letter
of the apostle John	one letter
of the other John the elder	two letters
of the apostle Judas the Zealot	one letter

HERE ENDS THE CANON OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

III. Likewise it was said:

The manuscripts of the shorter recension begin at this point, with the following heading:

HERE BEGINS THE DECRETAL 'ON BOOKS TO BE RECEIVED AND NOT TO BE RECEIVED' WHICH WAS WRITTEN BY POPE GELASIUS AND SEVENTY MOST ERUDITE BISHOPS AT THE APOSTOLIC SEAT IN THE CITY OF ROME

Both versions then continue as follows:

1. After all these [writings of] the prophets and the evangelical and apostolic scriptures which we discussed above, on which the catholic church is founded by the grace of God, we also have thought necessary to say what, although the universal catholic church diffused throughout the world is the single bride of Christ, however the holy Roman church is given first place by the rest of the churches without [the need for] a synodical decision, but from the voice of the Lord our saviour in the gospel obtained primacy: 'You are Peter,' he said, 'and upon this rock I shall build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it; and to you I give the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you shall bind upon Earth shall be bound also in heaven and whatever you release upon Earth shall also be released in heaven'.

2. In addition there is also the presence of the blessed apostle Paul, 'the chosen vessel', who not in opposition, as the heresies jabber, but on the same date and the same day was crowned in glorious death with Peter in the city of Rome suffering under Nero Caesar; and equally they made the above-mentioned holy Roman church special in Christ the Lord and gave preference in their presence and veneration-worthy triumph before all other cities in the whole world.

3. Therefore first is the seat at the Roman church of the apostle Peter 'having no spot or wrinkle or any other [defect]'.

However the second place was given in the name of blessed Peter to Mark his disciple and gospel-writer at Alexandria, and who himself wrote down the word of truth directed by Peter the apostle in Egypt and gloriously consummated [his life] in martyrdom.

Indeed the third place is held at Antioch of the most blessed and honourable apostle Peter, who lived there before he came to Roma and where first the name of the new race of the Christians was heard.

IV. And although 'no other foundation can be established except that which has been established, Christ Jesus', however for edification likewise the holy Roman church after the books of the Old and New Testaments which we have enumerated above according to the canon also does not prohibit the reception of these writings:

1. the holy synod of Nicaea of 318 fathers chaired by the Emperor Constantine the Great,

at which the heretic Arius was condemned; the holy synod of Constantinople chaired by Theodosius the senior Augustus, at which the heretic Macedonius escaped his deserved condemnation;

the holy synod of Ephesus, at which Nestorius was condemned with the consent of the blessed pope Caelestinus chaired by Cyril of Alexandria in the magistrate's seat and by Arcadius the bishop sent from Italy;

the holy synod of Chalcedon chaired by Marcian Augustus and by Anatolius Bishop of Constantinople, at which the Nestorian et Eutychian heresies together with Dioscorus and his sympathisers were condemned.

but also if there are councils hitherto held by the holy fathers of lesser authority than those four, we have decreed [that] they must be both kept and received. Here added below is on the works of the holy fathers, which are received in the catholic church.

Likewise the works of blessed Caecilius Cyprian the martyr and Bishop of Carthage;
likewise the works of blessed Gregory Nanzanensis the bishop;
likewise the works of blessed Basil Bishop of Cappadocia;
likewise the works of blessed John Bishop of Constantinople;
likewise the works of blessed Theophilus Bishop of Alexandria;
likewise the works of blessed Cyril Bishop of Alexandria;
likewise the works of blessed Bishop Hilary of Poitiers;
likewise the works of blessed Ambrosius Bishop of Milan;
likewise the works of blessed Augustine Bishop of Hippo;
likewise the works of blessed Jerome the priest;
likewise the works of blessed Prosper a most religious man;

3. likewise the letter of blessed pope Leo sent to Flavian Bishop of Constantinople, of which text however if any portion is disputed and it is not that anciently received by all, let it be anathema;

likewise the works and every treatise of all the orthodox fathers, who deviated in nothing from the common [teaching] of the holy Roman church, neither separated from its faith or worship but remained in communion by the grace of God to the last day of their life, we decree are to be read;

likewise the decretal/official letters, which blessed popes gave for the consideration of various fathers at various times from the city of Rome, are to be upheld reverently;

4. likewise the deeds of the holy martyrs, who are glorious from the manifold tortures on the rack and their wonderful triumphs of steadfastness. Who of the catholics doubts that most of them would be enduring still in agonies with their full strength but would bear it by the grace of God and the help of everyone? but according to old custom by the greatest caution they are not read in the holy Roman church, because the names of those who wrote are not properly known and separate from unbelievers and idiots or [the accounts] are thought less attached to the order of events than they should have been; for instance the [accounts of] Cyricus and Julitta, like Georgius and the sufferings of others like these which appear to have been composed by heretics. On account of this, as it was said, so that no pretext for casual mockery can arise, they are not read in the holy Roman church. However we venerate together with the aforesaid church all the martyrs and their glorious sufferings, which are well known to God and men, with every devotion;

likewise the lives of the fathers Paul, Antony and Hilarion which with all the hermits described by that blessed man Jerome we receive with honour;

likewise the acts of blessed Silvester bishop of the apostolic seat, although the name of him who wrote [them] is unknown, [but] we know to be read by many catholics however in the city of Rome and because of the ancient use of the multitude this is imitated by the church;

likewise the writings on the finding of the cross and certain other novel writings on the finding of the head of the blessed John the Baptist are romances and some of them are read by catholics; but when these come into the hand of catholics, the saying of Paul the blessed apostle should be <considered> first: 'prove all things, hold fast to what is good'.

likewise Rufinus, a most religious man, work many books of ecclesiastical works, also some interpreting the scriptures; but since the venerable Jerome noted that he took arbitrary liberties in some of them, we think those [acceptable] which we know the aforesaid blessed Jerome thought [acceptable]; and not only those of Rufinus, but also [those] of anyone whom that man often remembered for his zeal for God and for the religion of faith criticised.

likewise some works of Origen, which the blessed man Jerome does not reject, we receive to be read, but we say that the rest with their author must be refused.

likewise the chronicle of Eusebius of Caesarea and the books of his church history, however much he fell flat in the first book of his narration and [although he also] afterwards wrote one book in praise and to excuse Origen the schismatic, however on account of his narration of remarkable things, which are useful for instruction, we do not say to anyone that it must be refused.

likewise we praise Orosius a most erudite man, who wrote a very necessary history for us against the calumnies of the pagans and and with marvellous brevity.

likewise the paschal work of that venerable man Sedulius, which was written in heroic verses [hexameters], we give preference to with manifest praise.

likewise the laborious work of Iuvencus we nevertheless do not spurn but are amazed by.

V. The remaining writings which have been compiled or been recognised by heretics or schismatics the Catholic and Apostolic Roman Church does not in any way receive; of these we have thought it right to cite below a few which have been handed down and which are to be avoided by catholics:

LIKEWISE A LIST OF APOCRYPHAL BOOKS

firstly we confess that the synod of Sirmium called together by Constantius Caesar the son of Constantine through the Prefect Taurus is damned then and now and for ever.

the Itinerary in the name of Peter the apostle, which is called the nine books of the holy Clement apocryphal

the Acts in the name of the apostle Andrew apocryphal

the Acts in the name of the apostle Thomas	apocryphal
the Acts in the name of the apostle Peter	apocryphal
the Acts in the name of the apostle Philip	apocryphal
the Gospel in the name of Mathias	apocryphal
the Gospel in the name of Barnabas	apocryphum
the Gospel in the name of James the younger	apocryphum
the Gospel in the name of the apostle Peter	apocryphum
the Gospel in the name of Thomas which the Manichaeans use	apocryphum
the Gospels in the name of Bartholomew	apocrypha
the Gospels in the name of Andrew	apocrypha
the Gospels which Lucianus forged	apocrypha
the Gospels which Hesychius forged	apocrypha
the book on the infancy of the saviour	apocryphus
the book of the nativity of the saviour and of Mary or the midwife	apocryphus
the book which is called by the name of the Shepherd	apocryphus
all the books which Leucius the disciple of the devil made	apocryphi
the book which is called the Foundation	apocryphus
the book which is called the Treasure	apocryphus
the book of the daughters of Adam Leptogenseos	apocryphus
the cento on Christ put together in Virgilian verses	apocryphum
the book which is called the Acts of Thecla and Paul	apocryphus
the book which is called Nepos's	apocryphus
the books of Proverbs written by heretics and prefixed with the name of holy Sixtus	apocryphus
the Revelation which is called Paul's	apocrypha
the Revelation which is called Thomas's	apocrypha
the Revelation which is called Stephen's	apocrypha
the book which is called the Assumption of holy Mary	apocryphus
the book which is called the Repentance of Adam	apocryphus
the book about Og the giant of whom the heretics assert that after the deluge he fought with the dragon	apocryphus
the book which is called the Testament of Job	apocryphus
the book which is called the Repentance of Origen	apocryphus
the book which is called the Repentance of holy Cyprian	apocryphus
the book which is called the Repentance of Jamne and Mambre	apocryphus

the book which is called the Lots of the apostles	apocryphus
the book which is called the grave-plate (?) of the apostles	apocryphus
the book which is called the canons of the apostles	apocryphus
the book Physiologus written by heretics and prefixed with the name of blessed Ambrose	apocryphus
the History of Eusebius Pamphili	apocrypha
the works of Tertullian	apocrypha
the works of Lactantius also known as Firmianus	apocrypha
the works of Africanus	apocrypha
the works of Postumianus and Gallus	apocrypha
the works of Montanus, Priscilla and Maximilla	apocrypha
the works of Faustus the Manichaeian	apocrypha
the works of Commodian	apocrypha
the works of the other Clement, of Alexandria	apocrypha
the works of Thascius Cyprianus	apocrypha
the works of Arnobius	apocrypha
the works of Tichonius	apocrypha
the works of Cassian the Gallic priest	apocrypha
the works of Victorinus of Pettau	apocrypha
the works of Faustus of Riez in Gaul	apocrypha
the works of Frumentius Caecus	apocrypha
<i>the cento on Christ stitched together from verses of Virgil</i>	<i>apocryphum</i>
the Letter from Jesus to Abgar	apocrypha
the Letter of Abgar to Jesus	apocrypha
the Passion of Cyricus and Julitta	apocrypha
the Passion of Georgius	apocrypha
the writing which is called the Interdiction of Solomon	apocrypha
all amulets which are compiled not in the name of the angels as they pretend but are written in the names of great demons	apocrypha

These and those similar ones, which Simon Magus, Nicolaus, Cerinthus, Marcion, Basilides, Ebion, Paul of Samosata, Photinus and Bonosus, who suffered from similar error, also Montanus with his obscene followers, Apollinaris, Valentinus the Manichaeian, Faustus the African, Sabellius, Arius, Macedonius, Eunomius, Novatus, Sabbatius, Calistus, Donatus, Eustasius, Jovianus, Pelagius, Julian of Eclanum, Caelestius, Maximian, Priscillian from Spain, Nestorius of Constantinople, Maximus the Cynic, Lampetius, Dioscorus, Eutyches, Peter and the other Peter, of whom one disgraced Alexandria and the other Antioch, Acacius of Constantinople with

his associates, and what also all disciples of heresy and of the heretics and schismatics, whose names we have scarcely preserved, have taught or compiled, we acknowledge is to be not merely rejected but eliminated from the whole Roman Catholic and Apostolic Church and with their authors and the followers of its authors to be damned in the inextricable shackles of anathema forever.

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Church and the Canon

"For the blessed apostle Paul himself, following the rule of his predecessor John, writes only by name to seven Churches in the following order--to the Corinthians afirst...there is a second to the Corinthians and to the Thessalonians, yet one Church is recognized as being spread over the entire world...Howbeit to Philemon one, to Titus one, and to Timothy two were put in writing...to be in honour however with the Catholic Church for the ordering of ecclesiastical discipline...one to the Laodiceans, another to the Alexandrians, both forged in Paul's name to suit the heresy of Marcion, and several others, which cannot be received into the Catholic Church; for it is not fitting that gall be mixed with honey. The Epistle of Jude no doubt, and the couple bearing the name of John, are accepted by the Catholic Church...But of Arsinous, called also Valentinus, or of Miltiades we receive nothing at all."

The fragment of Muratori (A.D. 177), in NE, 124

" In his[ie. Origen] first book on Matthew's Gospel, maintaining the Canon of the Church, he testifies that he knows only four Gospels, writing as follows: Among the four Gospels, which are the only indisputable ones in the Church of God under heaven, I have learned by tradition that the first was written by Matthew, who was once a publican, but afterwards an apostle of Jesus Christ, and it was prepared for the converts from Judaism, and published in the Hebrew language.

The second is by Mark, who composed it according to the instructions of Peter, who in his Catholic epistle acknowledges him as a son, saying, 'The church that is at Babylon elected together with you, saluteth you, and so doth Marcus, my son.' And the third by Luke, the Gospel commended by Paul, and composed for Gentile converts. Last of all that by John."

Origen, Commentary on Matthew, fragment in Eusebius Church History, 6:25,3 (A.D. 244), in NPNF2, I:273

"The same authority of the apostolic churches will afford evidence to the other Gospels also, which we possess equally through their means, and according to their usage--I mean the Gospels of John and Matthew--whilst that which Mark published may be affirmed to be Peter's whose interpreter Mark was. For even Luke's form of the Gospel men usually ascribe to Paul."

Tertullian, Against Marcion, 4:5 (A.D. 212), in ANF, III:350

"Learn also diligently, and from the Church, what are the books of the Old Testaments, and what those of the New."

Cyril of Jerusalem, Catechetical Lectures, 4:33 (A.D. 350), in NPNF2, VII:26

"I beseech you to bear patiently, if I also write, by way of remembrance, of matters with which you are acquainted, influenced by the need and advantage of the Church. In proceeding to make mention of these things [ie. the canon], I shall adopt, to comment my undertaking, the pattern of Luke...to reduce into order for themselves the books termed apocryphal, and to mix them up with the divinely inspired Scripture, concerning which we have been fully persuaded, as they who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the Word, delivered to the fathers; it seemed good to me also, having been urged thereto by true brethren, and having learned from the beginning, to set before you the books included in the Canon...."

Athanasius, Festal Letters, 39 (A.D. 367), in NPNF2, IV:551-552

"Likewise it has been said: Now indeed we must treat of the divine Scriptures, what the universal Catholic Church accepts and what she ought to shun. The order of the Old Testament begins here: Genesis one book, Exodus one book, Leviticus one book, Numbers one book, Deuteronomy one book, Josue Nave one book, Judges one book, Ruth one book, Kings four books, Paraleipomenon two books, Psalms one book, Solomon three books, Proverbs one book, Ecclesiastes one book, Canticle of Canticles one book, likewise Wisdom one book, Ecclesiasticus one book. Likewise the order of the Prophets. Isaias one book, Jeremias one book, with Ginoth, that is, with his lamentations, Ezechiel one book, Daniel one book, Osee one book, Micheas one

book, Joel one book, Abdias one book, Jonas one book, Nahum one book, Habacuc one book, Sophonias one book, Aggeus one book, Zacharias one book, Malachias one book. Likewise the order of the histories. Job one book, Tobias one book, Esdras two books, Esther one book, Judith one book, Machabees two books. Likewise the order of the writings of the New and eternal Testament, which only the holy and Catholic Church supports. Of the Gospels, according to Matthew one book, according to Mark one book, according to Luke one book, according to John one book. The Epistles of Paul [the apostle] in number fourteen. To the Romans one, to the Corinthians two, to the Ephesians one, to the Thessalonians two, to the Galatians one, to the Phillipians one, to the Colossians one, to Timothy two, to Titus one, to Philemon one, to the Hebrews one. Likewise the Apocalypse of John, one book. And the Acts of the Apostles one book. Likewise the canonical epistles in number seven. Of Peter the Apostle two epistles, of James the Apostle one epistle, of John the Apostle one epistle, of another John, the presbyter, two epistles, of Jude the Zealut, the Apostle one epistle."

Pope Damasus(regn A.D. 366-384),Decree of,Council of Rome,The Canon of Scripture(A.D. 382),in DEN,33

"Besides the canonical Scriptures, nothing shall be read, in the church under the title of divine writings.'. The canonical books are:---Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, the four books of Kings, the two books of Paraleipomena(Chronicles), Job, the Psalms of David, the five books of Solomon, the twelve books of the (Minor) Prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Ezekiel, Tobias, Judith, Esther, two books of Esdras, two books of the Maccabees. The books of the New Testament are:---the four Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, thirteen Epistles of S. Paul, one Epistle of S. Paul to the Hebrews, two Epistles of S. Peter, three Epistles of S. John, the Epistle of S. James, the Epistle of S. Jude, the Revelation of S. John. Concerning the confirmation of this canon, the transmarine Church shall be consulted." Council of Hippo, Canon 36 (A.D. 393), in HCC,2:400

"[It has been decided] that nothing except the Canonical Scriptures should be read in the church under the name of the Divine Scriptures. But the Canonical Scriptures are:Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Josue, Judges, Ruth, four books of Kings, Paraleipomenon two books, Job, the Psalter of David, five books of Solomon, twelve books of the Prophets, Isaias, Jeremias, Daniel, Ezechiel, Tobias, Judith, Esther, two books of Esdras, two books of the Maccabees. Moreover, of the New Testament: Four books of the Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles one book, thirteen epistles of Paul the Apostle, one of the same to the Hebrews, two of Peter, three of John, one of James, one of Jude, the Apocalypse of John."

Council of Carthage III, Canon 47 (A.D. 397), in DEN, 39-40

"The authority of our books [Scriptures], which is confirmed by agreement of so many nations, supported by a succession of apostles, bishops, and councils, is against you."

Augustine, Reply to Faustus the Manichean, 13:5 (c.A.D. 400), in NPNF1, IV:201

"If any one shall say, or shall believe, that other Scriptures, besides those which the Catholic church has received, are to be esteemed of authority, or to be venerated, let him be anathema."

Council of Toledo, Canon 12 (A.D. 400), in FOC, 1:445

"A brief addition shows what books really are received in the canon. These are the desiderata of which you wished to be informed verbally: of Moses five books, that is, of Genesis, of Exodus, of Leviticus, of Numbers, of Deuteronomy, and Josue, of Judges one book, of Kings four books, also Ruth, of the Prophets sixteen books, of Solomon five books, the Psalms. Likewise of the histories, Job one book, of Tobias one book, Esther one, Judith one, of the Machabees two, of Esdras two, Paralipomenon two books. Likewise of the New Testament: of the Gospels four books, of Paul the Apostle fourteen epistles, of John three, epistles of Peter two, an epistle of Jude, an epistle of James, the Acts of the Apostles, the Apocalypse of John."

Pope Innocent (regn. A.D. 401-417), Epistle to Exsuperius Bishop of Toulouse, 6:7, 13 (A.D. 405), in DEN, 42

"Item, that besides the Canonical Scriptures nothing be read in the church under the name of divine Scripture. But the Canonical Scriptures are as follows: Genesis....The Revelation of John...for these are the things which we have received from our fathers to be read in the church."

Council of Carthage, African Code, Canon 24 (A.D. 419), in NPNF2, XIV:453-454

"The book of the Apocalypse which John the wise wrote, and which has been honoured by the approval of the fathers."

Cyril of Alexandria, Worship and Adoration in Spirit and in Truth, 5 (A.D. 425), in FOC, I:445

"Now, in regard to the canonical Scriptures, he must follow the judgment of the greater number of catholic churches; and among these, of course, a high place must be given to such as have been thought worthy to be the seat of an apostle and to receive epistles. Accordingly, among the canonical Scriptures he will judge according to the following standard: to prefer those that are received by all the catholic

churches to those which some do not receive. Among those, again, which are not received by all, he will prefer such as have the sanction of the greater number and those of greater authority, to such as are held by the smaller number and those of less authority. If, however, he shall find that some books are held by the greater number of churches, and others by the churches of greater authority (though this is not a very likely thing to happen), I think that in such a case the authority on the two sides is to be looked upon as equal. Now the whole canon of Scripture on which we say this judgment is to be exercised, is contained in the following books:--Five books of Moses, that is, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy; one book of Joshua the son of Nun; one of Judges; one short book called Ruth, which seems rather to belong to the beginning of Kings; next, four books of Kings, and two of Chronicles --these last not following one another, but running parallel, so to speak, and going over the same ground. The books now mentioned are history, which contains a connected narrative of the times, and follows the order of the events. There are other books which seem to follow no regular order, and are connected neither with the order of the preceding books nor with one another, such as Job, and Tobias, and Esther, and Judith, and the two books of Maccabees, and the two of Ezra, which last look more like a sequel to the continuous regular history which terminates with the books of Kings and Chronicles. Next are the Prophets, in which there is one book of the Psalms of David; and three books of Solomon, viz., Proverbs, Song of Songs, and Ecclesiastes. For two books, one called Wisdom and the other Ecclesiasticus, are ascribed to Solomon from a certain resemblance of style, but the most likely opinion is that they were written by Jesus the son of Sirach. Still they are to be reckoned among the prophetic books, since they have attained recognition as being authoritative. The remainder are the books which are strictly called the Prophets: twelve separate books of the prophets which are connected with one another, and having never been disjoined, are reckoned as one book; the names of these prophets are as follows:--Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi; then there are the four greater prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Ezekiel. The authority of the Old Testament is contained within the limits of these forty-four books. That of the New Testament, again, is contained within the following:--Four books of the Gospel, according to Matthew, according to Mark, according to Luke, according to John; fourteen epistles of the Apostle Paul--one to the Romans, two to the Corinthians, one to the Galatians, to the Ephesians, to the Philippians, two to the Thessalonians, one to the Colossians, two to Timothy, one to Titus, to Philemon, to the Hebrews: two of Peter; three of John; one of Jude; and one of James; one book of the Acts of the Apostles; and one of the Revelation of John."

Augustine, On Christian Doctrine, 2:8, 12 (A.D. 426), in NPNF1, II:538-539



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Canon XXIV. (Greek xxvii.)

That nothing be read in church besides the Canonical Scripture.

Item, that besides the Canonical Scriptures nothing be read in church under the name of divine Scripture.

But the Canonical Scriptures are as follows:

Genesis.

Exodus.

Leviticus.

Numbers.

Deuteronomy.

Joshua the Son of Nun.

The Judges.

Ruth.

The Kings, iv. books.

[454](#)The Chronicles, ij. books.

Job.

The Psalter.

The Five books of Solomon.

The Twelve Books of the Prophets.

Isaiah.

Jeremiah.

Ezekiel.

Daniel.

Tobit.

Judith.

Esther.

Ezra, ij. books.

Macchabees, ij. books.

The New Testament.

The Gospels, iv. books.

The Acts of the Apostles, j. book.

The Epistles of Paul, xiv.

The Epistles of Peter, the Apostle, ij.

The Epistles of John the Apostle, iij.

The Epistles of James the Apostle, j.

The Epistle of Jude the Apostle, j.

The Revelation of John, j. book.

Let this be sent to our brother and fellow bishop, Boniface, and to the other bishops of those parts, that they may confirm this canon, for these are the things which we have received from our fathers to be read in church.

Notes.

Ancient Epitome of Canon XXIV.

Let nothing besides the canonical Scriptures be read in church.

This is Canon xxxvj. of Hippo., 393. The last phrase allowing the reading of the “passions of the Martyrs” on their Anniversaries is omitted from the African code.

Johnson.

These two books [i.e. the two Maccabees] are mentioned only in Dionysius Exiguus’s copy. See *Can. Ap. ult.*, *Can. Laod. ult.*

“Boniface,” i.e., Bishop of Rome.

NPNF2-14. The Seven Ecumenical Councils

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St. Exuperius

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(Also spelled Exsuperius).

Bishop of [Toulouse](#) in the beginning of the fifth century; place and [date](#) of birth unascertained; died after 410. Succeeding St. Silvius as [bishop](#), he completed the basilica of [St. Saturninus](#), begun by his predecessor. [St. Jerome](#) praises him for his munificence to the [monks](#) of Palestine, [Egypt](#), and Libya, and for his charity to the people of his own diocese, who were then suffering from the depredations of the [Vandals](#), Alans, and Suevi. Of great austerity and simplicity of life, he sought not his own, but gave what he had to the poor. For their sake he even sold the altar vessels and was compelled in consequence to carry the Sacred Host in an osier basket and the Precious Blood in a vessel of glass. In esteem for his virtues and in gratitude for his gifts, [St. Jerome](#) dedicated to him his "Commentary on Zacharias . Exuperius is best known in connection with the Canon of the [Sacred Scriptures](#). He had written to [Innocent I](#) for instructions concerning the canon and several points of [ecclesiastical discipline](#). In reply, the [pope honoured](#) him with the letter *Consulenti tibi*, dated February, 405, which contained a list of the canonical scriptures as we have them today, including the deuterocanonical books of the [Catholic](#) Canon, books of the

[Catholic](#) Canon. The assertion of non-Catholic writers that the Canon of [Innocent I](#) excluded the Apocrypha is not [true](#), if they mean to extend the term *Apocrypha* to the deuterocanonical books.

The opinion of [Baronius](#), that the [bishop](#) Exuperius was identical with the rhetor of the same name, is quite generally rejected, as the rhetor was a teacher of Hannibalianus and Dalmatius, nephews of [Constantine the Great](#), over a half a century before the period of the [bishop](#). From Jerome's letter to Furia of [Rome](#), in 394, and from the epistle of St. Paulinus to Amandus of Bordeaux, in 397, it seems probable that Exuperius was a [priest](#) at [Rome](#), and later at [Bordeaux](#), before he was raised to the episcopate, though it is possible that in both of these letters reference is made to a different [person](#). Just when he became [bishop](#) is unknown. That he occupied the [See of Toulouse](#) in February, 405, is evident from the letter of [Innocent I](#) mentioned above; and from a statement of [St. Jerome](#) in a letter to Rusticus it is [certain](#) that he was still living in 411. It is sometimes said that [St. Jerome](#) reproved him, in a letter to Riparius, a [priest](#) of [Spain](#), for tolerating the [heretic](#) Vigilantius; but as Vigilantius did not belong to the [diocese](#) of [Toulouse](#), [St. Jerome](#) was probably speaking of another [bishop](#).

Exuperius was early [venerated](#) as a saint. Even in the time of [St. Gregory of Tours](#) he was held in equal veneration with [St. Saturninus](#). His [feast](#) occurs on 28 September. The first martyrologist to assign it to this date was [Usuard](#), who wrote towards the end of the ninth century.

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ECUMENICAL COUNCIL OF FLORENCE (1438-1445)

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[Council of Basel](#)

Introduction

Basel had been designated as the place for this ecumenical council by the abortive council of Pavia — Siena (1423-1424). It was opened on 25 July 1431 by the papal legate, who had been appointed by Pope Martin V in two bulls dated 1 February 1431, *Dum onus universalis gregis* and *Nuper siquidem cupientes* shortly before the pope's death on 20 February 1431. A great part of the council's work in the early years was taken up with its quarrel with Pope Eugenius IV, who was accused of wishing to dissolve or transfer the council. The prospect of re-union with the eastern church provided an opportunity to transfer the council to another city. This move was supported by the council fathers loyal to the pope, who however were in a minority, and in the 25th session they voted for the city of Ferrara. There the council was re-opened on 8 January 1438, Pope Eugenius IV later attending in person. Some historians doubt the ecumenicity of the first 25 sessions at Basel. All agree that the sessions held at Basel after the 25th session until the final one on 25 April 1449 cannot be regarded as sessions of an ecumenical council.

The Greek bishops and theologians attended the council of Ferrara from 9 April 1438. The council was transferred to Florence on 10 January 1439. There, in the session on 6 July 1439, the decree of union with the Greek church was approved. Subsequently decrees of union with the Armenian and Coptic churches were approved. Finally the council was transferred to Rome on 24 February 1443. There other decrees of union with the Bosnians, the Syrians and finally with the Chaldeans and Maronites of Cyprus, were approved. The last session of the council was held on 7 August 1445.

The decisions taken at Basel have the form of conciliar decrees. Those taken at Ferrara, Florence and Rome are almost always in the form of bulls, since the pope

was presiding in person; in these cases the decree mentions the council's approval and contains the words "in a solemnly celebrated general session of the synod".

Almost all the decrees of re-union were of little effect. Nevertheless it is significant that the church's unity was discussed in a council attended by some eastern bishops and theologians, and that there was agreement on the principal dogmatic and disciplinary questions which had divided the two churches for many centuries.

The acts of the council of Basel were first published by S. Brant in Basel in 1499, with the title *Decreta concilii Basileensis* (= Dc). This collection was subsequently published by Z. Ferreri at Milan in 1511, and by J. Petit at Paris in 1512. Almost all later conciliar collections included the acts and decrees of the council of Basel, from Merlin to Mansi's *Amplissima collectio* (= Msi). A brief history of these collections was written in 1906 by H. Herre in his work entitled, *Handschriften und Drucke Baseler Konzilsakten*, in *Deutsche Reichstagsakten unter Kaiser Sigmund*, Part IV/1, 1431-1432, 10/1, Goettingen 1957, XCVI-CI. Another edition of the decrees of Basel is contained in John of Segovia's diary, which is to be found in *Monumenta conciliorum generalium saeculi XV* (= Mxv), II Vienna 1873. Editio Romana, however, omits the council of Basel (see Labbe-Cossart XIII, n. 7; S. Kuttner, *L'Édition romaine des conciles généraux*, Rome 1940).

For Basel, we have followed the edition of Msi 29 (1788) 1-227. We have noted the principal variants in Dc and Mxv. We have omitted some decrees pertaining to internal matters of the council, to the quarrel with Eugenius IV and to administration; we have always noted the titles of these decrees in footnotes. The decrees of Ferrara, Florence and Rome were first published by P. Crabbe (1538, 2, 754V-826). H. Justinianus subsequently published a more careful edition, *Acta sacri oecumenici concilii Florentini*, Rome 1638, which was followed by later collections until Msi 31 supplement (1901) (see V. Laurent *L'édition princeps des actes du Concile de Florence*, *Orient. Christ. Per.* 21 (1955) 165-189, and J. Gill, *ibid.* 22 (1956) 223-225). The decrees are also to be found in *Monumenta conc. gen. saec. XV*, III-IV Vienna 1886-1935. We have followed the critical edition published by the Pontifical Oriental Institute, *Concilium Florentinum. Documenta et Scriptorum* (= CF), Rome 1940-, and we have included the principal variants noted in it.

As regards the English translation, the following points should be noted where the original text is given in two languages, namely Latin and another. Where a Greek text is given (pp. 520-528), this is of equal authority with the parallel Latin version, and in the English translation the few significant discrepancies between the two texts have been noted. In the cases of Armenian and Arabic texts (pp. 534-559 and 567-583), these were translations from the Latin, which was the authoritative text, and therefore the English translation is from the Latin alone (the differences from the Latin in the Armenian and Arabic texts are numerous and complex). For these points, see J. Gill, *The Council of Florence*, Cambridge 1959, pp. 290-296, 308 and 326.

(See Council of Basel)

Session 1—8 January 1438

[Declaration of cardinal Nicholas Albergati, president of the council]

We, Nicholas, legate of the apostolic see, announce that we preside on behalf of our most holy lord pope Eugenius IV in this sacred synod which was translated from Basel to the city of Ferrara and is already legitimately assembled, and that the continuation of this translated synod has been effected today 8 January, and that the synod is and ought to be continued from today onwards for all the purposes for which the synod of Basel was convened, including being the ecumenical council at which the union of the western and the eastern church is treated and with God's help achieved.

Session 2—10 January 1438

[On the legitimate continuation of the council of Ferrara, against the assembly at Basel]

For the praise of almighty God, the exaltation of the catholic faith and the peace, tranquillity and unity of the whole Christian people. This holy universal synod, through the grace of God authorized by the most blessed lord pope Eugenius IV, legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit in this city of Ferrara, represents the universal church. Its president, on behalf and in the name of the said most holy lord Eugenius, is the most reverend father and lord in Christ lord Nicholas, cardinal-priest of the holy Roman church of the title of holy Cross in Jerusalem, legate of the apostolic see. It adheres to the firm foundation of him who said to the prince of the apostles: You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church. It is eager to preserve the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, so that we might be one body and one spirit, just as we were called in the one hope of our calling. It records that much was done in days past both at the former council of Basel and after its translation by some staying on there without any authority, and also by the said most blessed pope lord Eugenius, especially in respect of the business of the most holy union of the western and the eastern church, namely the following: the decree of the nineteenth session of the former council of Basel beginning As a dutiful mother, to which the most holy lord Eugenius gave his assent by his letter; also an agreed proposal on the choice of a place to which the council of Basel should be translated which was agreed upon and confirmed by all the fathers in common and which led to the decree of the twenty-fifth session of the former council, which begins This holy synod from its outset etc. and which the pope himself, urged on by the envoys of the Greeks, accepted and confirmed by his letter given in a general consistory at

Bologna and published in the presence of these envoys, also the letter of the same most blessed Eugenius dated 18 September last, issued in a general consistory at Bologna and solemnly read out at the beginning of the continuation of this synod, by which the pope with the counsel and consent of the most reverend cardinals of the holy Roman church and with the approval of the prelates then in the curia, transferred the council to this city of Ferrara; also the letter of the declaration of the same, dated 30 December, immediately following the said translation; all of which this holy synod has ordered to be registered verbatim in its acts as a permanent record, as is contained in these same acts.

All these facts and many more have been duly pondered and maturely discussed in various meetings. This holy synod declares that the aforesaid translation and declaration were and are legitimate, just and reasonable, and were and are made from urgent necessity so as to remove an obstacle to the most holy union of the western and the eastern church, to prevent a schism already threatening in God's church, and for the manifest benefit of the whole Christian commonwealth, and that therefore this holy synod was legitimately assembled and established in the holy Spirit in this city of Ferrara for all the purposes for which the said former council of Basel was instituted at its beginning, and especially to be the future ecumenical council for the aforesaid most holy union; and that it ought to continue and to proceed to all the aforesaid matters. This holy synod therefore praises, accepts and approves the translation and the consequent declaration, as mentioned above. It exhorts in the Lord and requires of each and all of the present and future members of the holy synod to apply themselves to the above things with earnest care and serious study. By the generosity of him who has begun in us a good work, may everything be directed and done for his glory and the salvation of the whole Christian people.

This holy synod further declares that, since the well known necessity of the above reasons demanded and impelled the said most holy lord Eugenius to that translation, the matter in no way falls within the decrees of the eighth, the eleventh or any other session of the former council of Basel.

It decrees that the assembly at Basel, and every other assembly which may perchance convene there or elsewhere under the name of a general council, rather is and ought to be considered a spurious gathering and conventicle, and can in no way exist with the authority of a general council.

It quashes, invalidates and annuls, and declares to be invalid, quashed, null and of no force or moment, each and all of the things done in the city of Basel in the name of a general council after the said translation, and whatever may be attempted there or elsewhere in the future in the name of a general council.

But if in the matter of the Bohemians something useful has been achieved by the said people assembled at Basel after the said translation, it intends to approve that and supply for defects.

In order that each and all of the members of the holy synod may be kept safe from every annoyance and may serve God in good works without anxiety, free from all fear, harassment and injury, this holy synod absolves, frees and dispenses, and declares to be absolved and freed, and the oaths to be dispensed from, each and all of those who, under whatsoever plea or cause, bound themselves to the former synod of Basel by oaths, with obligations and commitments, whereby their full and free right to obey this present holy synod and to promote its honour and good might be impeded and they might have scruples of some kind.

This holy synod also ordains and decrees that nobody of whatsoever rank or dignity, by any ordinary or delegated jurisdiction for any cause or occasion, except by the jurisdiction of the apostolic see, shall dare to disturb, harass or molest, in their dignities, offices, administrations, privileges, honours, benefices and other goods, each and all of those, both seculars and religious, including members of mendicant orders, who are or shall be at this present synod, or who follow the Roman curia and will soon be at this synod on account of the move of the most holy lord Eugenius with his curia to this city, which has been announced by the posting up of notices in accordance with the ancient custom of the curia.

But if, under any pretext, directly or indirectly, any should presume to molest any of the said persons in their dignities, offices, administrations, honours, privileges, benefices or other goods, or to prevent them from freely enjoying their jurisdiction, fruits and emoluments as they did before, or to confer on others their dignities, offices, administrations, honours and benefices, on the plea of some deprivation, this holy synod intends that each and all of them, even if they are cardinals, patriarchs, archbishops, bishops or persons with some other dignity, or chapters, colleges, convents or universities, shall incur automatically and without the need for a previous warning sentences of excommunication, suspension and interdict, absolution from which is reserved to the Roman pontiff alone, except at the hour of death.

Moreover the synod decrees that those who do not repent within three days after making these conferrals or placing these obstacles, by fully restoring those whose dignities, offices, administrations, honours and benefices they conferred, or whom they impeded in other ways, as stated above, to all their churches and benefices as they held them before, whether they held them by title, in commendam or in administration; and also each and all of those who presume to accept collation to the aforesaid dignities, offices, administrations, honours and benefices, even if they were made *motu proprio*, or to take possession of them in person or through others, or to hold such action as valid; all these persons are automatically deprived by law, if they previously had any claim in them, of all their other benefices, whether they held them by title, in commendam or in administration, and they are rendered perpetually disqualified from them and all other benefices, and they can be restored and habilitated only by the Roman pontiff.

This holy synod, moreover, warns and requires each and all of those who are obliged by law or custom to take part in general councils, to come as soon as possible to this present synod at Ferrara, which will continue, as noted above, for the speedy attainment of the aforesaid purposes.

Session 3—15 February 1438

[Ecclesiastical penalties against members of the Basel synod]

Eugenius, bishop, servant of the servants of God, for an everlasting record. The duties of the pastoral office over which we preside by divine mercy, despite our lack of merit, demand that we repress by opportune remedies the nefarious excesses of evil-minded persons, especially those who, unless prevented, strive to force the peaceful state of the church into various dangerous storms and disturbances and who endeavour to overturn the barque of Peter, and that we inflict due retribution for their excesses, lest boasting of their malice they give occasion to others to commit mischief. For it is a crime to be slack in punishing crimes that harm many people, as canonical regulations state.

Thus, the former council of Basel debated the choice of a place for the future ecumenical council. Those on whom the power of choosing the place devolved, passed a decree which was accepted by the ambassadors of our most dear son in Christ John, emperor of the Greeks, and of our venerable brother Joseph, patriarch of Constantinople. Some persons chose Avignon or another place, but the said ambassadors protested that most assuredly they did not want to go there, declaring as certain that the said emperor and patriarch would by no means go to the said sacred council unless we attended in person. Those who asked for Avignon, afraid that the Greeks certainly would not come to them, dared to concoct a certain decree or notorious pamphlet, which they call a monition, against us, even though it is null and indeed leads to serious scandal and a split in the church, disrupting this holy work of union with the Greeks.

In order to preserve the unity of the church and to promote the said union with the Greeks, we, for just, necessary and pressing reasons, with the advice and assent of our venerable brothers the cardinals of the holy Roman church, and with the advice and approval of very many of our venerable brothers the archbishops, bishops, beloved chosen sons and abbots who were present at the apostolic see, translated the said council of Basel, by our apostolic authority and in a fixed manner and form, to the city of Ferrara, which is suitable for the Greeks and for us, so that those at Basel might duly recoil from their scandalous actions, as is contained at greater length in the letter composed for the occasion'. But they, spurning every avenue of peace, persevering in their obstinate purpose, scorning the letter of the said translation and everything contained in it, and piling evil upon evil, not only rejected our reasonable translation made for the said most just and urgent reasons, as stated above, but even

dared with renewed obstinacy to warn us to withdraw the said translation within a fixed time and under pain of suspension. Yet this would have been nothing less than to force us to abandon the prosecution of such a holy work so much desired by all Christians.

When we realized this, with grief of heart, since we saw that everything tended to the destruction of the holy task of union and to an open split in the church, as was said above, we declared that the translation had been made by us from necessity, that the conditions attached to it had been regularized, and that the council at Ferrara ought to begin and legitimately continue, as is stated more fully in another letter of ours .

To open this council at Ferrara we sent our beloved son Nicholas, cardinal-priest of the holy Roman church of the title of holy Cross, legate of us and the apostolic see.

This council at Ferrara, legitimately assembled and with many prelates, solemnly declared in a public session that the said translation and declaration were and are legitimate, just and reasonable, and were made from urgent necessity so as to remove an obstacle to the said most holy union between the western and the eastern church and to avoid an impending split in God's church for the evident benefit of the whole Christian commonwealth, as is crystal clear from the decree made about it.

Meanwhile, informed that the aforesaid emperor, patriarch and Greeks were approaching the shores of Italy, under God's guidance we came to this council at Ferrara with the firm intention and purpose of effectively pursuing, with God's help, not only the work of holy union but also the objectives for which the council of Basel had assembled.

In view of all this, our beloved son Julian, cardinal-priest of the title of St Sabina, legate of the apostolic see, strongly urged the aforesaid people at Basel to withdraw from such flagrant scandals. But because of their obstinacy of mind he was without effect. Then, seeing them ready to precipitate still worse scandals in God's church, he departed so as not to appear to approve their impiety. They, for their part, paid no attention to this. Ignorant of how to direct their steps in the way of peace and justice, although they were already aware that the Greeks were utterly unwilling to come to them and were approaching the shores of Italy, they persevered in their hardness of heart. Since they could in no other way prevent and disrupt the union with the Greeks, for which they should have been labouring with us with all their strength and mind and assisting us, they added bad to worse and went to such a pitch of rashness and insolence that, even though many of the envoys of kings and princes who were at Basel execrated so wicked a deed and protested against it, they dared to declare with sacrilegious arrogance that we were suspended from the administration of the papacy and to proceed to various other things, albeit everything was null.

So we, conscious that their excesses are so notorious that they cannot be hidden by any subterfuge, and that error that is not resisted appears to be approved and throws

wide open to delinquents a door that no longer guards against their intrusions, and unable without grave offence to our lord Jesus Christ and his holy church to tolerate further so many grievous excesses which are seen especially to impede, disrupt and utterly destroy the holy and most desired union with the Greeks, we decree against the aforesaid remnant at Basel, in virtue of the most High and with the approval of this holy council, the steps that should be taken with justice.

Hence we decree and declare, after mature deliberation with this holy synod and with its approval, that each and all of those meeting in Basel, in spite of the aforesaid translation and declaration, under the pretended name of a council which more accurately should be called a conventicle, and daring to perpetrate such scandalous and nefarious deeds, whether they are cardinals, patriarchs archbishops, bishops or abbots or of some other ecclesiastical or secular dignity, have already incurred the penalties instanced in our said letter of translation, namely excommunication, privation of dignities and disqualification from benefices and offices in the future.

We also decree and declare to be null and void and of no force or moment, whatever has been attempted by them in the name of a council or otherwise since the day of the translation made by us, or shall be attempted in the future, in respect of the aforesaid matters or against those who follow our curia or are at this sacred council at Ferrara.

We also command, with the approval of this council, under the same penalties and censures and in virtue of their oath by which they are bound to the holy apostolic see, each and all of the cardinals, patriarchs, archbishops, bishops, elected persons, abbots and all others of whatsoever condition, status or rank who are meeting in the said city of Basel under the pretext of a council, really and effectively to leave the said city within thirty days of the date of this decree. We also order the mayor of the citizens, the councillors and the magistrates ruling the city of Basel and the governors and other officials, whatever name they go under, to expel the aforesaid persons who have not left the city within the said thirty days and really and effectively to eject them.

If they fail to do this within the said thirty days, we decree that each and all of the said rulers and officials automatically incur sentence of excommunication, and the people and the city automatically incur sentence of ecclesiastical interdict; we specially reserve to ourself absolution from the sentences of excommunication, except at the hour of death, and the lifting of the interdict. We order and command, in virtue of holy obedience and under pain of excommunication, each and all of those to whom this notice shall come that, if the aforesaid persons meeting in Basel and the citizens are obstinately disobedient towards us, nobody should approach the city of Basel after the said thirty days and they should deny them all commerce and all articles needed for human use.

Merchants of all kinds, who have gone to Basel on account of the former council, shall depart under the same pain of excommunication. If there are some who ignore these orders of ours, daring perhaps to convey goods after the time-limit to those at Basel persisting in contumacy, since it is written that the righteous plundered the ungodly, such persons may be despoiled without penalty by any of the faithful and their goods shall be ceded to the first takers.

However, because the church never closes its bosom to returning sons, if the said people meeting in Basel, or some of them, repent and depart from the said city within the said interval of thirty days from the date of this present decree, then with the approval of this sacred council we remit and fully cancel the aforesaid penalties as for obedient sons and we wish, decree and order that they and their consequences are to be regarded as without force from the date of their imposition, and we supply with the council's approval for all defects, if perhaps there are any in respect of solemnity of the law or of omission. Let nobody therefore ... If anyone however ...

Session 4—29 April 1438

[Eugenius IV and the fathers of the council at Ferrara declare the council at Ferrara to be legitimate and ecumenical]

Eugenius, bishop, servant of the servants of God, for an everlasting record. It befits us to render thanks to almighty God who, mindful of his past mercies, always bestows on his church even richer growth and, although he allows her to be tossed on occasions by the waves of trials and tribulations, yet never permits her to be submerged but keeps her safe amid the mountainous waters, so that by his mercy she emerges from the various vicissitudes even stronger than before. For behold, the western and eastern peoples, who have been separated for long, hasten to enter into a pact of harmony and unity; and those who were justly distressed at the long dissension that kept them apart, at last after many centuries, under the impulse of him from whom every good gift comes, meet together in person in this place out of desire for holy union.

We are aware that it is our duty and the duty of the whole church to strain every nerve to ensure that these happy initiatives make progress and have issue through our common care, so that we may deserve to be and to be called co-operators with God.

Finally, our most dear son John Palacologus, emperor of the Romans, together with our venerable brother Joseph, patriarch of Constantinople, the apocrisiaries of the other patriarchal sees and a great multitude of archbishops, ecclesiastics and nobles arrived at their last port, Venice, on 8 February last. There, the said emperor expressly declared, as he had often done before, that for good reasons he could not go to Basel to celebrate the ecumenical or universal council, and he intimated this by

a letter to those assembled at Basel. He exhorted and required all of them to go to Ferrara, which had been chosen for the council, to carry through the pious task of this holy union.

We have always had this holy union close to our heart and have sought with all our strength to bring it about. Therefore we intend to carry out with care, as is our duty, the decree of the council of Basel, to which the Greeks agreed, as well as the choice of a place for the ecumenical council, which was made at the council of Basel and which was later confirmed by us at Bologna at the urging of the envoys of the said emperor and patriarch, and any other things pertaining to this work of holy union.

Therefore we decree and declare, in every way and form as best we can, with the assent of the said emperor and patriarch and of all those in the present synod, that there exists a holy universal or ecumenical synod in this city of Ferrara, which is free and safe for all; and therefore it should be deemed and called such a synod by all, in which this holy business of union will be conducted without any quarrelsome contention but with all charity and, as we hope, will be brought by divine favour to a happy conclusion together with the other holy tasks for which the synod is known to have been instituted.

Session 5—10 January 1439

[Decree translating the council of Ferrara to Florence]

Eugenius, bishop, servant of the servants of God, for an everlasting record. It is fitting that the site of an ecumenical council, in which men chosen from the whole Christian world meet together, should be such that in it, among other human necessities, there should be the most important of all, namely healthy air. Otherwise, because of the pest-laden contagion of infected air which all people naturally fear and flee, those present at the council may be forced to depart with nothing accomplished and the absent will refuse to attend. Assuredly it is right that those who come together at synods to treat of difficult questions should be free from every anxiety and fear, so that they may be able in greater peace and freedom to give their attention to the matters of public concern.

We would, indeed, have preferred that the universal council which we initiated in this city should continue here, and that the union of the eastern and western churches should be brought to its happy and desired conclusion in this city, where we initiated it. When the plague afflicted this city last autumn, pressure was exerted by some for the transferal of the synod to a non-infected locality. Nothing was done, however, because it was hoped that the plague would cease with the advent of winter, as it usually does.

Since in fact the plague continues from day to day and it is feared that it will gain strength when spring and summer come, all judge and advise that a move must be made without delay to some non-infected place. For this and several other good reasons, with the agreement of our dear son John Palaeologus, emperor of the Romans, and of our venerable brother Joseph, patriarch of Constantinople, and with the approval of the council:

In the name of the Trinity, Father, Son and holy Spirit, with the full securities and safe-conducts which we gave to all at the beginning of the sacred council, we transfer and declare to be transferred as from now this ecumenical or universal synod from this city of Ferrara to the city of Florence, which is manifestly free for all, safe, peaceful and tranquil, and enjoying healthy air, and which, situated as it is between the Tyrrhenian and Adriatic seas, is excellently situated for easy access for both easterners and westerners. Let nobody therefore . . . If anyone however . . .

Session 6—6 July 1439

[Definition of the holy ecumenical synod of Florence]

Eugenius, bishop, servant of the servants of God, for an everlasting record. With the agreement of our most dear son John Palaeologus, illustrious emperor of the

Romans, of the deputies of our venerable brothers the patriarchs and of other representatives of the eastern church, to the following.

Let the heavens be glad and let the earth rejoice. For, the wall that divided the western and the eastern church has been removed, peace and harmony have returned, since the corner-stone, Christ, who made both one, has joined both sides with a very strong bond of love and peace, uniting and holding them together in a covenant of everlasting unity. After a long haze of grief and a dark and unlovely gloom of long-enduring strife, the radiance of hoped-for union has illuminated all.

Let mother church also rejoice. For she now beholds her sons hitherto in disagreement returned to unity and peace, and she who hitherto wept at their separation now gives thanks to God with inexpressible joy at their truly marvellous harmony. Let all the faithful throughout the world, and those who go by the name of Christian, be glad with mother catholic church. For behold, western and eastern fathers after a very long period of disagreement and discord, submitting themselves to the perils of sea and land and having endured labours of all kinds, came together in this holy ecumenical council, joyful and eager in their desire for this most holy union and to restore intact the ancient love. In no way have they been frustrated in their intent. After a long and very toilsome investigation, at last by the clemency of the holy Spirit they have achieved this greatly desired and most holy union. Who, then, can adequately thank God for his gracious gifts? Who would not stand amazed

at the riches of such great divine mercy? Would not even an iron breast be softened by this immensity of heavenly condescension?

These truly are works of God, not devices of human frailty. Hence they are to be accepted with extraordinary veneration and to be furthered with praises to God. To you praise, to you glory, to you thanks, O Christ, source of mercies, who have bestowed so much good on your spouse the catholic church and have manifested your miracles of mercy in our generation, so that all should proclaim your wonders. Great indeed and divine is the gift that God has bestowed on us. We have seen with our eyes what many before greatly desired yet could not behold.

For when Latins and Greeks came together in this holy synod, they all strove that, among other things, the article about the procession of the holy Spirit should be discussed with the utmost care and assiduous investigation. Texts were produced from divine scriptures and many authorities of eastern and western holy doctors, some saying the holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son, others saying the procession is from the Father through the Son. All were aiming at the same meaning in different words. The Greeks asserted that when they claim that the holy Spirit proceeds from the Father, they do not intend to exclude the Son; but because it seemed to them that the Latins assert that the holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son as from two principles and two spirations, they refrained from saying that the holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son. The Latins asserted that they say the holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son not with the intention of excluding the Father from being the source and principle of all deity, that is of the Son and of the holy Spirit, nor to imply that the Son does not receive from the Father, because the holy Spirit proceeds from the Son, nor that they posit two principles or two spirations; but they assert that there is only one principle and a single spiration of the holy Spirit, as they have asserted hitherto. Since, then, one and the same meaning resulted from all this, they unanimously agreed and consented to the following holy and God-pleasing union, in the same sense and with one mind.

In the name of the holy Trinity, Father, Son and holy Spirit, we define, with the approval of this holy universal council of Florence, that the following truth of faith shall be believed and accepted by all Christians and thus shall all profess it: that the holy Spirit is eternally from the Father and the Son, and has his essence and his subsistent being from the Father together with the Son, and proceeds from both eternally as from one principle and a single spiration. We declare that when holy doctors and fathers say that the holy Spirit proceeds from the Father through the Son, this bears the sense that thereby also the Son should be signified, according to the Greeks indeed as cause, and according to the Latins as principle of the subsistence of the holy Spirit, just like the Father.

And since the Father gave to his only-begotten Son in begetting him everything the Father has, except to be the Father, so the Son has eternally from the Father, by

whom he was eternally begotten, this also, namely that the holy Spirit proceeds from the Son.

We define also that the explanation of those words "and from the Son" was licitly and reasonably added to the creed for the sake of declaring the truth and from imminent need.

Also, the body of Christ is truly confectioned in both unleavened and leavened wheat bread, and priests should confection the body of Christ in either, that is, each priest according to the custom of his western or eastern church. Also, if truly penitent people die in the love of God before they have made satisfaction for acts and omissions by worthy fruits of repentance, their souls are cleansed after death by cleansing pains; and the suffrages of the living faithful avail them in giving relief from such pains, that is, sacrifices of masses, prayers, almsgiving and other acts of devotion which have been customarily performed by some of the faithful for others of the faithful in accordance with the church's ordinances.

Also, the souls of those who have incurred no stain of sin whatsoever after baptism, as well as souls who after incurring the stain of sin have been cleansed whether in their bodies or outside their bodies, as was stated above, are straightaway received into heaven and clearly behold the triune God as he is, yet one person more perfectly than another according to the difference of their merits. But the souls of those who depart this life in actual mortal sin, or in original sin alone, go down straightaway to hell to be punished, but with unequal pains. We also define that the holy apostolic see and the Roman pontiff holds the primacy over the whole world and the Roman pontiff is the successor of blessed Peter prince of the apostles, and that he is the true vicar of Christ, the head of the whole church and the father and teacher of all Christians, and to him was committed in blessed Peter the full power of tending, ruling and governing the whole church, as is contained also in the acts of ecumenical councils and in the sacred canons.

Also, renewing the order of the other patriarchs which has been handed down in the canons, the patriarch of Constantinople should be second after the most holy Roman pontiff, third should be the patriarch of Alexandria, fourth the patriarch of Antioch, and fifth the patriarch of Jerusalem, without prejudice to all their privileges and rights.

Session 7—4 September 1439

[Decree of the council of Florence against the synod at Basel]

Eugenius, bishop, servant of the servants of God, for an everlasting record. Moses, the man of God, was zealous for the well-being of the people entrusted to him. He feared that God's wrath would be roused against them if they followed Korah,

Dathan and Abiram in their seditious schism. Therefore he said to the whole people, at the Lord's command: depart from the tents of these wicked men and touch nothing of theirs, lest you be involved in their sins. For he had perceived, under the Lord's inspiration, that those seditious and schismatic men would incur a grievous retribution, as was demonstrated afterwards when even the earth could not bear with them but by God's just judgment swallowed them up, so that they fell alive into hell.

Similarly we too to whom, though unworthy, the lord Jesus Christ has deigned to entrust his people, as we hear of the abominable crime that certain wicked men dwelling in Basel have plotted in these days so as to breach the unity of holy church, and since we fear that they may seduce some of the unwary by their deceits and inject them with their poisons, are forced to proclaim in like words to the people of our lord Jesus Christ entrusted to us, depart from the tents of these wicked men, particularly since the Christian people is far more numerous than the Jewish people of those days, the church is holier than the synagogue, and the vicar of Christ is superior in authority and status even to Moses.

This impiety of those at Basel we began to foresee long ago, when we observed the council of Basel already lapsing into tyranny; when many, including those of lower status, were forced to go to it and to stay at the whim of that faction of agitators; when the votes and decisions of some of them were being extorted by various tricks and others were being suborned by lies and deceits, as they abandoned almost everything to conspiracies, cabals, monopolies and cliques, and from a long-standing rivalry with the papacy sought to prolong the duration of the council; when, finally, innumerable novelties, irregularities, deformities and ills were perpetrated, to which there concurred even clerics in lower orders, the ignorant and inexperienced, vagabonds, quarrelers, fugitives, apostates, condemned criminals, escapees from prison, those in rebellion against us and their own superiors, and other such human monsters, who brought with them every stain of corruption from those teachers of evil-doing.

We directed our attention also to that most holy work of union with the eastern church, which seemed to us to be greatly endangered by the deceit of certain factious persons, and we wished to provide as best we could for so many evils. For these and other just and necessary reasons which are stated in full in the decree of translation, with the advice of our venerable brothers the cardinals of the holy Roman church, and with the approval of very many venerable brothers and sons, archbishops, bishops, elected persons, abbots and other prelates of churches, masters and doctors, we transferred the aforesaid council of Basel to this city of Ferrara, where we established with the Lord's help an ecumenical council of the western and the eastern church.

Afterwards, when the plague came and continued unabated, under the inspiration of grace and with the approval of the same holy council, we transferred the council to this city of Florence. Here the most gracious and merciful God showed his wonders. For, the most disastrous schism, which had endured in God's church for almost five

hundred years to the immense harm of the whole of Christianity, and for the elimination of which very many of our predecessors as Roman pontiffs and many kings and princes and other Christians in past times had laboured very hard, at last, after public and private discussions in both places and many other labours, was removed and the most holy union of the Greeks and the Latins was happily achieved, as is described more fully in the decree about this which was drawn up and solemnly promulgated.

Returning fervent thanks for this to the eternal God and sharing our joy with all the faithful, we offered to God a sacrifice of jubilation and praise. For we saw that not just one nation like the Hebrew people was being summoned to the promised land, but peoples of many races, nations and tongues were hastening to the one utterance and merit of the divine truth. Through this, great hope is forthcoming that the sun of justice, rising in the east, will spread the beams of its light to pierce the darkness of many other races, even of infidels, and the salvation of the Lord may reach to the ends of the earth.

Already indeed, by God's providence, we have excellent pledges of this. For almighty God has granted that, by our means, representatives of the Armenians with full powers have recently come from most distant northern parts to us and the apostolic see and to this holy council. They regard and venerate us as no other than blessed Peter, prince of the apostles, they recognize the holy see as mother and mistress of all the faithful, and they profess that they have come to the holy see and to the aforesaid council for spiritual food and the truth of sound doctrine. For this too we have given many thanks to our God.

But the mind recoils from recording what troubles, attacks and persecutions we have suffered in the course of this divine undertaking until now, not indeed from Turks or Saracens but from those who call themselves Christians. Blessed Jerome reports that from the time of Hadrian until the reign of Constantine there was set up and worshipped by the pagans at the place of the Lord's resurrection an image of Jupiter and on the rock of the crucifixion a marble statue of Venus, since the authors of persecution thought that they could take away from us our faith in the resurrection and the cross if they polluted the holy places with their idols.

Much the same has happened in these days against us and the church of God, at the hands of those desperate men at Basel, except that what was then done by pagans ignorant of the true God is now the work of men who have known him and hated him. Their pride, then, according to the prophet, is ever rising, all the more dangerously in that it is under the cloak of reform, which in truth they have always abhorred, that they spread their poisons.

In the first place, those who were the authors of all the scandals in Basel have failed in their promises to the Greeks. For they knew from the envoys of the Greeks and the eastern church that our most dear son in Christ John Palaeologus, illustrious emperor of the Romans, and Joseph, patriarch of Constantinople of happy memory,

and the other prelates and persons of the eastern church wished to proceed to the place which had been legally chosen for the ecumenical council by our legates and presidents and other notable persons present there, whose right it was to choose the site in accordance with the agreement which had been approved by the common consent of the council after serious disagreements among its members. Whereupon we, for our part, confirmed the choice of place in a general consistory at Bologna and we sent to Constantinople, at great labour and expense, the galleys and other things necessary for this holy work of union.

When they learnt of this, they dared to decree against us and the aforesaid cardinals a detestable admonition or citation, so as to block the holy work, [and to send it to the aforesaid emperor and patriarch of Constantinople, so that they and all others] might be deterred from coming. Yet they knew full well that there was no chance of them going to any place other than the one which had been chosen for the site, as stated above.

Then, when they realized that the aforesaid emperor and patriarch and others were already on their way to us for this work of holy union, they tried to lay another wicked snare to catch this divine project. That is, they produced against us a sacrilegious sentence of suspension from the administration of the papacy. Finally, those leaders of scandal, very few in number, most of them of the lowest rank and reputation, in their intense hatred of true peace, piling iniquity on top of iniquity lest they should enter into the justice of the Lord, when they saw that the grace of the holy Spirit was working in us towards union with the Greeks, swerving away from the straight line into paths of error, held a so-called session on 16 May last asserting that they were obeying certain decrees, although these were passed at Constance by only one of the three obediences after the flight of John XXIII, as he was called in that one obedience, at a time of schism.

Alleging obedience to those decrees, they proclaimed three propositions which they term truths of the faith, seemingly to make heretics of us and all princes and prelates and other faithful and devout adherents of the apostolic see. The propositions are the following.

"The truth about the authority of a general council, representing the universal church, over a pope and anyone else whatsoever, declared by the general councils of Constance and this one of Basel, is a truth of the catholic faith. The truth that a pope cannot by any authority, without its consent, dissolve a general council representing the universal church, legitimately assembled for the reasons given in the above-mentioned truth or for any of them, or prorogue it to another time or transfer it from place to place, is a truth of the catholic faith. Anyone who persists in opposing the aforesaid truths is to be considered a heretic."

In this, those utterly pernicious men, masking their malice with the rosy colour of a truth of the faith, gave to the council of Constance an evil and mischievous meaning completely opposed to its true teaching, imitating in this the teaching of other

schismatics and heretics who always amass for their support fabricated errors and impious dogmas drawn from their perverse interpretation of the divine scriptures and the holy fathers.

Finally, completely perverting their mind and turning away their eyes from looking to heaven or remembering righteous judgments, after the manner of Dioscorus and the infamous synod of Ephesus, they proceeded to a declaratory sentence of deprivation, as they claimed, from the dignity and office of the supreme apostolate, a poisonous and execrable pronouncement involving an unforgivable crime. Here we will take the tenor of that sentence, abhorrent to every pious mind, as sufficiently expressed. They omitted nothing, as far as was in their power, that might overthrow this incomparable good of union.

O miserable and degenerate sons! O wicked and adulterous generation! What could be more cruel than this impiety and iniquity? Can anything more detestable, more dreadful and more mad be imagined? Earlier on they were the ones who said that nothing better, nothing more glorious and fruitful had ever been seen or heard of in the Christian people, from the very birth of the church, than this most holy union, and that to further it there should be no contention about the place, but rather to achieve it the wealth of this world as well as body and soul should be hazarded, proclaiming this aloud to the whole world and urging the Christian people to it, as their decrees and letters fully state. But now they persecute exactly this as furiously and as impiously as they can, so that the devils of the entire world seem to have flocked together to that conventicle of brigands at Basel.

So far almighty God has not allowed their iniquity and its lying inconsistencies to prevail. But seeing that they are striving with all their strength to bring it to success, even to the point of setting up the abomination of desolation in God's church, we can in no way pretend to ignore these things without most serious offence to God and imminent danger of confusion and abomination in God's church. In keeping with our pastoral office, at the urging of many who are fired with zeal for God, we wish to put a stop to such evils and, as far as we can, to take appropriate and salutary measures to eliminate from God's church this execrable impiety and most destructive pestilence.

Following in the steps of our predecessors who, as Pope Nicholas of holy memory writes, were accustomed to annul councils which had been conducted improperly, even those of universal pontiffs, as occurred at the second universal synod at Ephesus, inasmuch as the blessed pope Leo summoned it but later established the council of Chalcedon.

We renew by our apostolic authority, with the approval of this holy council of Florence, the solemn and salutary decree against those sacrilegious men, which was issued by us in the sacred general council of Ferrara on 15 February. By that decree we declared among other things, with the approval of the said sacred council of Ferrara, that each and every person at Basel who, in the name of a pretended council

which we called more accurately a conventicle, dared to perpetrate those scandalous and wicked deeds in contravention of our translation and declaration, whether they are cardinals, patriarchs, archbishops, bishops, abbots or of some other ecclesiastical or secular dignity, has incurred the penalties of excommunication, privation of dignities, benefices and offices and disqualification for the future, which are instanced in our letter of translation.

Now we decree and declare again that all the things done or attempted by those impious men presently in Basel, which were mentioned in our said decree of Ferrara, and each and all of the things done, performed or attempted by the same men since then, especially in the two so-called sessions or rather conspiracies which have just been mentioned, and whatever may have followed from these things or from any of them, or may follow in the future, as coming from impious men who have no authority and have been rejected and reprobated by God, were and are null, quashed, invalid, presumptuous and of no effect, force or moment.

With the approval of the sacred council we condemn and reject, and we proclaim as condemned and rejected, those propositions quoted above as understood in the perverse sense of the men at Basel, which they demonstrate by their deeds, as contrary to the sound sense of sacred scripture, the holy fathers and the council of Constance itself; and likewise the aforesaid so-called sentence of declaration or deprivation, with all its present and future consequences, as impious and scandalous and tending to open schism in God's church and to the confusion of all ecclesiastical order and Christian government. Also, we decree and declare that all of the aforesaid persons have been and are schismatics and heretics, And that as such they are assuredly to be punished with suitable penalties over and above the penalties imposed at the aforesaid council of Ferrara, together with all their supporters and abettors, of whatever ecclesiastical or secular status, condition or rank they may be, even cardinals, patriarchs, archbishops, bishops or abbots or those of any other dignity, so that they may receive their deserts with the aforesaid Korah, Dathan and Abiram Let nobody therefore ... If anyone however ...

Session 8—22 November 1439

[Bull of union with the Armenians]

Eugenius, bishop, servant of the servants of God, for an everlasting record. All people everywhere who go by the name of Christian: Exult in God our helper, rejoice in the God of Jacob. Behold the Lord once again, mindful of his mercy had deigned to remove from his church another stumbling block which has endured for more than nine centuries. He who makes peace in the heavens and is peace on earth for people of good will, has granted in his inexpressible mercy that most desired union with the Armenians. Blessed be the God and Father of our lord Jesus Christ, the father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our tribulation.

For the most merciful Lord, seeing his church buffeted about by strong whirlwinds, some times at the hands of those who are outside, at other times at the hands of those within, deigns in many ways every day to console and strengthen her so that she may be able to breathe freely in the midst of her troubles and to rise more robust to resist.

Some time ago God established that great union with the Greeks, who include many races and tongues spread far and wide. Today God has confirmed in the same bond of faith and charity with the apostolic see this union with the Armenians, who are a very numerous people spread over the north and east. These indeed are such great and wondrous benefactions of divine providence that the human mind cannot render worthy thanks for either of them, still less for both together. Who would not be overwhelmed with admiration at the achievement in this council, within so short a time, of two such brilliant feats which have been longed for over centuries? Truly this is the Lord's doing and it is wonderful in our eyes. For how could human prudence or diligence have brought to completion such great exploits as these are, unless the favour of God had given them their beginning and end? Let us, then, together and with all our hearts bless the Lord who alone does great wonders, let us sing with the spirit, let us sing with our minds and our mouths and let us give thanks in deeds, as far as human weakness allows, for such great gifts. Let us pray and beseech that, as the Greeks and the Armenians have been made one with the Roman church, so also may other nations be, especially those signed with the seal of Christ, and that finally the whole Christian people, after all hatreds and wars have been extinguished, may rest and rejoice together in mutual peace and brotherly love. Rightly we hold that the Armenians deserve great praise. As soon as they were invited by us to this synod, in their eagerness for ecclesiastical unity, at the cost of many labours and much toil and perils at sea, they sent to us and this council from very distant parts, their notable, dedicated and learned envoys with sufficient powers to accept, namely whatever the holy Spirit should inspire this holy synod to achieve.

We, for our part, with all our attention as befits our pastoral office and desiring to bring this holy work to a successful conclusion, frequently conversed with their envoys about this holy union. To avoid even the slightest delay in this holy project, we nominated from every rank of this sacred council experts in divine and human law to treat of the matter with the envoys with all care, study and diligence, closely inquiring of them about their faith in respect of the unity of the divine essence and the Trinity of divine persons, also about the humanity of our lord Jesus Christ, the seven sacraments of the church and other points concerning the orthodox faith and the rites of the universal church.

So, after many debates, conferences and disputations, after a thorough examination of the written authorities which were produced from fathers and doctors of the church, and after discussion of the questions at issue, at length, so that in future there could be no doubt about the truth of the faith of the Armenians and that they should think in every way like the apostolic see and that the union should be stable and lasting with no cause for hesitation whatsoever we judged it advantageous, with the

approval of this sacred council of Florence and the agreement of the said envoys, to give in this decree a summary of the truth of the orthodox faith that the Roman church professes about the above.

In the first place, then, we give them the holy creed issued by the hundred and fifty bishops in the ecumenical council of Constantinople, with the added phrase and the Son, which for the sake of declaring the truth and from urgent necessity was licitly and reasonably added to that creed, which runs as follows: I believe . . . I We decree that this holy creed should be sung or read within the mass at least on Sundays and greater feasts, as is the Latin custom, in all Armenian churches.

In the second place, we give them the definition of the fourth council of Chalcedon about two natures in the one person of Christ, which was later renewed in the fifth and sixth universal councils. It runs as follows: This wise and saving creed ... Thirdly, the definition about the two wills and two principles of action of Christ promulgated in the above-mentioned sixth council, the tenor of which is This pious and orthodox creed, and the rest which follows in the above-mentioned definition of the council of Chalcedon until the end, after which it continues thus: And we proclaim

Fourth, apart from the three synods of Nicaea, Constantinople and the first of Ephesus, the Armenians have accepted no other later universal synods nor the most blessed Leo, bishop of this holy see, by whose authority the council of Chalcedon met. For they claim that it was proposed to them that both the synod of Chalcedon and the said Leo had made the definition in accordance with the condemned heresy of Nestorius. So we instructed them and declared that such a suggestion was false and that the synod of Chalcedon and blessed Leo holily and rightly defined the truth of two natures in the one person of Christ, described above, against the impious tenets of Nestorius and Eutyches. We commanded that for the future they should hold and venerate the most blessed Leo, who was a veritable pillar of the faith and replete with all sanctity and doctrine, as a saint deservedly inscribed in the calendar of the saints; and that they should reverence and respect, like the rest of the faithful, not only the three above-mentioned synods but also all other universal synods legitimately celebrated by the authority of the Roman pontiff.

Fifthly, for the easier instruction of the Armenians of today and in the future we reduce the truth about the sacraments of the church to the following brief scheme. There are seven sacraments of the new Law, namely baptism, confirmation, eucharist, penance, extreme unction, orders and matrimony, which differ greatly from the sacraments of the old Law. The latter were not causes of grace, but only prefigured the grace to be given through the passion of Christ; whereas the former, ours, both contain grace and bestow it on those who worthily receive them. The first five of these are directed to the spiritual perfection of each person in himself, the last two to the regulation and increase of the whole church.

For, by baptism we are reborn spiritually; by confirmation we grow in grace and are strengthened in faith. Once reborn and strengthened, we are nourished by the food of the divine eucharist. But if through sin we incur an illness of the soul, we are cured spiritually by penance. Spiritually also and bodily as suits the soul, by extreme unction. By orders the church is governed and spiritually multiplied; by matrimony it grows bodily.

All these sacraments are made up of three elements: namely, things as the matter, words as the form, and the person of the minister who confers the sacrament with the intention of doing what the church does. If any of these is lacking, the sacrament is not effected.

Three of the sacraments, namely baptism, confirmation and orders, imprint indelibly on the soul a character, that is a kind of stamp which distinguishes it from the rest. Hence they are not repeated in the same person. The other four, however, do not imprint a character and can be repeated.

Holy baptism holds the first place among all the sacraments, for it is the gate of the spiritual life; through it we become members of Christ and of the body of the church. Since death came into the world through one person, unless we are born again of water and the spirit, we cannot, as Truth says, enter the kingdom of heaven. The matter of this sacrament is true and natural water, either hot or cold. The form is: I baptize you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy Spirit. But we do not deny that true baptism is conferred by the following words: May this servant of Christ be baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy Spirit; or, This person is baptized by my hands in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy Spirit. Since the holy Trinity is the principle cause from which baptism has its power and the minister is the instrumental cause who exteriorly bestows the sacrament, the sacrament is conferred if the action is performed by the minister with the invocation of the holy Trinity. The minister of this sacrament is a priest, who is empowered to baptize in virtue of his office. But in case of necessity not only a priest or a deacon, but even a lay man or a woman, even a pagan and a heretic, can baptize provided he or she uses the form of the church and intends to do what the church does. The effect of this sacrament is the remission of all original and actual guilt, also of all penalty that is owed for that guilt. Hence no satisfaction for past sins is to be imposed on the baptized, but those who die before they incur any guilt go straight to the kingdom of heaven and the vision of God.

The second sacrament is confirmation. Its matter is chrism made from oil and balsam blessed by a bishop, the oil symbolizing the gleaming brightness of conscience and balsam symbolizing the odour of a good reputation. The form is: I sign you with the sign of the cross and I confirm you with the chrism of salvation in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy Spirit. The ordinary minister is a bishop. Whereas a simple priest can use other unctions, only a bishop ought to confer this one, because it is said only of the apostles, whose place is held by bishops, that they gave the holy Spirit by the imposition of hands, as this text from

the Acts of the Apostles shows: Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent to them Peter and John, who came down and prayed for them that they might receive the holy Spirit; for it had not yet come down upon any of them, but they had only been baptized in the name of the lord Jesus. Then they laid their hands on them and they received the holy Spirit'. In place of this imposition of hands confirmation is given in the church. We read that sometimes for a reasonable and really urgent cause, by dispensation of the apostolic see, a simple priest has conferred this sacrament of confirmation with chrism prepared by a bishop. The effect of this sacrament is that a Christian should boldly confess the name of Christ, since the holy Spirit is given in this sacrament for strengthening just as he was given to the apostles on the day of Pentecost. Therefore the candidate is enjoined on the forehead, which is the seat of shame, not to shrink from confessing the name of Christ and especially his cross, which is a stumbling block for Jews and a folly for gentiles, according to the Apostle, and for this reason he is signed with the sign of the cross. The third is the sacrament of the eucharist. Its matter is wheat bread and wine from the vine, to which a very little water is added before the consecration. Water is added thus because it is believed, in accordance with the testimony of holy fathers and doctors of the church manifested long ago in disputation, that the Lord himself instituted this sacrament in wine mixed with water, and because it befits the representation of the Lord's passion. For the blessed pope Alexander, fifth after blessed Peter, says: "In the oblations of the sacraments which are offered to the Lord within the solemnities of masses, only bread and wine mixed with water are to be offered in sacrifice. There should not be offered in the chalice of the Lord either wine only or water only but both mixed together, because both blood and water are said to have flowed from Christ's side'; also because it is fitting to signify the effect of this sacrament, which is the union of the Christian people with Christ. For, water signifies the people according to those words of the Apocalypse: many waters, many peoples. And Pope Julius, second after blessed Silvester, said: The chalice of the Lord, by a precept of the canons, should be offered mixed of wine and water, because we see that the people is understood in the water and the blood of Christ is manifested in the wine; hence when wine and water are mingled in the chalice, the people are made one with Christ and the mass of the faithful are linked and joined together with him in whom they believe. Since, therefore, both the holy Roman church taught by the most blessed apostles Peter and Paul and the other churches of Latins and Greeks, in which the lights of all sanctity and doctrine have shone brightly, have behaved in this way from the very beginning of the growing church and still do so, it seems very unfitting that any other region should differ from this universal and reasonable observance. We decree, therefore, that the Armenians should conform themselves with the whole Christian world and that their priests shall mix a little water with the wine in the oblation of the chalice, as has been said. The form of this sacrament are the words of the Saviour with which he effected this sacrament. A priest speaking in the person of Christ effects this sacrament. For, in virtue of those words, the substance of bread is changed into the body of Christ and the substance of wine into his blood. In such wise, however, that the whole Christ is contained both under the form of bread and under the form of wine, under any part of the consecrated host as well as after division of the

consecrated wine, there is the whole Christ. The effect of this sacrament, which is produced in the soul of one who receives it worthily, is the union of him or her with Christ. Since by grace a person is incorporated in Christ and is united with his members, the consequence is that grace is increased by this sacrament in those who receive it worthily, and that every effect that material food and drink produce for corporal life — sustaining, increasing, repairing and delighting — this sacrament works for spiritual life. For in it, as Pope Urban said, we recall the gracious memory of our Saviour, we are withdrawn from evil, we are strengthened in good and we receive an increase of virtues and graces.

The fourth sacrament is penance. Its matter is the acts of the penitent, which are threefold. The first is contrition of heart, which includes sorrow for sin committed, with the resolve not to sin again. The second is oral confession, which implies integral confession to the priest of all sins that are remembered. The third is satisfaction for sins in accordance with the judgment of the priest which is ordinarily done by prayer, fasting and almsgiving. The form of this sacrament are the words of absolution which the priest pronounces when he says: I absolve you. The minister of this sacrament is a priest with authority to absolve, which is either ordinary or by commission of a superior.

The fifth sacrament is extreme unction. Its matter is olive oil blessed by a priest. This sacrament should not be given to the sick unless death is expected. The person is to be anointed on the following places: on the eyes for sight, on the ears for hearing, on the nostrils for smell, on the mouth for taste or speech, on the hands for touch, on the feet for walking, on the loins for the pleasure that abides there. The form of this sacrament is: Through this anointing and his most pious mercy may the Lord pardon you whatever you have done wrong by sight, and similarly for the other members. The minister of the sacrament is a priest. Its effect is to cure the mind and, in so far as it helps the soul, also the body. Blessed James the apostle said of this sacrament: Any one of you who is sick should send for the elders of the church, and they shall pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. The prayer of faith will save the sick person and the Lord will raise him up again: and if he is in sins, they will be forgiven him.

The sixth is the sacrament of orders. Its matter is the object by whose handing over the order is conferred. So the priesthood is bestowed by the handing over of a chalice with wine and a paten with bread; the diaconate by the giving of the book of the gospels; the subdiaconate by the handing over of an empty chalice with an empty paten on it; and similarly for the other orders by allotting things connected with their ministry. The form for a priest is: Receive the power of offering sacrifice in the church for the living and the dead, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy Spirit. The forms for the other orders are contained in full in the Roman pontifical. The ordinary minister of this sacrament is a bishop. The effect is an increase of grace to make the person a suitable minister of Christ.

The seventh is the sacrament of matrimony, which is a sign of the union of Christ and the church according to the words of the apostle: This sacrament is a great one, but I speak in Christ and in the church. The efficient cause of matrimony is usually mutual consent expressed in words about the present. A threefold good is attributed to matrimony. The first is the procreation and bringing up of children for the worship of God. The second is the mutual faithfulness of the spouses towards each other. The third is the indissolubility of marriage, since it signifies the indivisible union of Christ and the church. Although separation of bed is lawful on account of fornication, it is not lawful to contract another marriage, since the bond of a legitimately contracted marriage is perpetual.

Sixthly, we offer to the envoys that compendious rule of the faith composed by most blessed Athanasius, which is as follows:

Whoever wills to be saved, before all things it is necessary that he holds the catholic faith. Unless a person keeps this faith whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish eternally. The catholic faith is this, that we worship one God in the Trinity, and the Trinity in unity, neither confounding the persons nor dividing the substance. For there is one person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the holy Spirit. But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son and of the holy Spirit is one, the glory equal, and the majesty co-eternal. Such as the Father is, such is the Son, and such is the holy Spirit. The Father uncreated the Son uncreated and the holy Spirit uncreated. The Father infinite, the Son infinite and the holy Spirit infinite. The Father eternal, the Son eternal and the holy Spirit eternal. Yet they are not three eternals, but one eternal. As also they are not three uncreateds nor three infinites, but one uncreated and one infinite. Likewise the Father is almighty, the Son is almighty and the holy Spirit is almighty. Yet they are not three almighties, but one almighty. Likewise the Father is God, the Son is God and the holy Spirit is God. Yet they are not three gods, but one God. Likewise the Father is Lord, the Son is Lord and the holy Spirit is Lord. Yet they are not three lords, but one Lord. For just as we are compelled by the Christian truth to acknowledge each person by himself to be God and Lord, so we are forbidden by the catholic religion to say there are three gods or three lords. The Father is made by none, neither created nor begotten. The Son is from the Father alone; not made nor created, but begotten. The holy Spirit is from the Father and the Son; not made nor created nor begotten, but proceeding. So there is one Father, not three fathers; one Son, not three sons; one holy Spirit, not three holy spirits. And in this Trinity nothing is before or after, nothing is greater or less; but the whole three persons are co-eternal together and co-equal. So that in all things, as has been said above, the unity in Trinity and the Trinity in unity is to be worshipped. Whoever, therefore, wishes to be saved, let him think thus of the Trinity.

It is also necessary for salvation to believe faithfully the incarnation of our lord Jesus Christ. The right faith, therefore, is that we believe and confess that our lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, is God and man. God, of the substance of the Father, begotten before the ages; and man, of the substance of his mother, born in the world.

Perfect God, perfect man, subsisting of a rational soul and human flesh. Equal to the Father according to his Godhead, less than the Father according to his humanity. Although he is God and man, he is not two, but one Christ. One, however, not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh, but by the taking of humanity into God. One altogether, not by confusion of substance, but by unity of person. For as a reasoning soul and flesh is one man, so God and man is one Christ. He suffered for our salvation and descended into hell. On the third day he rose from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father almighty. Thence he shall come to judge the living and the dead. At his coming all shall rise again with their bodies, and shall give an account of their own deeds. Those who have done good shall go into eternal life, but those who have done evil shall go into eternal fire.

This is the catholic faith. Unless a person believes it faithfully and firmly, he cannot be saved.

Seventhly, the decree of union concluded with the Greeks, which was promulgated earlier in this sacred ecumenical council of Florence and which is as follows: Let the heavens be glad . . . '

Eighthly, there was discussion with the Armenians about, among other things, the days on which the following feasts should be kept: the annunciation of the blessed virgin Mary, the birth of blessed John the Baptist and, in consequence, the birth and the circumcision of our lord Jesus Christ and his presentation in the temple (or the purification of the blessed virgin Mary). The truth was made quite clear by the testimonies of fathers and by the custom of the Roman church and all other churches among Latins and Greeks. Therefore, lest the rites of Christians be at variance in such great celebrations, whence a threat to charity could arise, we decree that, as something consonant with truth and reason, the Armenians too should solemnly celebrate, according to the observance of the rest of the world, the following feasts on the following days: the annunciation of the blessed virgin Mary on 25 March, the birth of blessed John the Baptist on 24 June, the birth of our Saviour on 25 December, his circumcision on 1 January, the epiphany on 6 January, and the presentation of our Lord in the temple (or the purification of the mother of God) on 2 February.

After all these matters had been explained, the aforesaid Armenians, in their own name and in the name of their patriarch and of all Armenians, with all devotion and obedience accept, admit and embrace this salutary synodal decree with all its chapters, declarations, definitions, traditions, precepts and statutes and all the doctrine contained in it, and also whatever the holy apostolic see and the Roman church holds and teaches. They also accept with reverence all those doctors and holy fathers approved by the Roman church. Indeed, they hold as reprobated and condemned whatever persons and things the Roman church reprobates and

condemns. They promise that as true sons of obedience, in the name as above, they will faithfully obey the ordinances and commands of the apostolic see.

When the aforesaid decree had been solemnly read out in our and the holy synod's presence, straightaway our beloved son Narses, an Armenian, in the name of the said envoys, publicly recited the following in Armenian and thereupon our beloved son Basil of the order of friars Minor, the interpreter between us and the Armenians, publicly read it out in Latin as follows.

Most blessed father and most holy synod. Recently the whole of this holy decree, which has now been read out in Latin in your presence, was clearly explained and interpreted to us word by word in our language. It was and is completely acceptable to us. To disclose our understanding more fully, however, we repeat its contents in summary.

The following is contained in it. First, you give to our people of the Armenians the holy creed of Constantinople, with the added phrase and the Son, to be sung or read within the mass in our churches at least on Sundays and greater feasts. Secondly, the definition of the fourth universal council of Chalcedon about two natures in the one person of Christ. Thirdly, the definition about the two wills and principles of action of Christ which was promulgated in the sixth universal council.

Fourthly, you declare that the synod of Chalcedon and most blessed pope Leo rightly defined the truth about two natures in the one person of Christ against the impious doctrines of Nestorius and Eutyches. You order that we should venerate most blessed Leo as holy and a pillar of the faith and that we should reverently accept not only the synods of Nicaea, Constantinople and the first of Ephesus, but also all other synods legitimately celebrated . . . authority of the Roman pontiff.

Fifthly, a short scheme of the seven sacraments of the church, namely baptism, confirmation, eucharist, penance, extreme unction, orders and matrimony indicating the matter, the form and the minister of each; and that while the chalice is being offered in the sacrifice of the altar a little water should be mixed with the wine.

Sixthly, a compendious rule of the faith of most blessed Athanasius, which begins: Whoever wills to be saved etc.

Seventhly, the decree of union concluded with the Greeks, which was promulgated earlier in this sacred council, recording how the holy Spirit proceeds eternally from the Father and the Son, and that the phrase and the Son was licitly and reasonably added to the creed of Constantinople. Also that the body of the Lord is effected in leavened or unleavened wheat bread; and what is to be believed about the pains of purgatory and hell, about the life of the blessed and about suffrages offered for the dead. In addition, about the plenitude of power of the apostolic see given by Christ to blessed Peter and his successors, about the order of the patriarchal sees.

Eighthly, you decree that the following feasts should be kept on the following days, in accordance with the custom of the universal church: the annunciation of the blessed virgin Mary on 25 March, the birth of blessed John the Baptist on 24 June, the birth of our Saviour on 25 December, his circumcision on 1 January, the epiphany on 6 January, and the presentation of the Lord in the temple (or the purification of blessed Mary) on 2 February.

Therefore we envoys, in our own name and in the name of our reverend patriarch and of all Armenians, with all devotion and obedience accept, admit and embrace, just as your holiness affirms in the decree, this most salutary synodal decree with all its chapters, declarations, definitions, traditions, precepts and statutes and all the doctrine contained in it, and also whatever the holy apostolic see and the Roman church holds and teaches. We accept with reverence all those doctors and holy fathers approved by the Roman church. Indeed we hold as reprobated and condemned whatever persons and things the Roman church reprobates and condemns. We promise that as true sons of obedience, in the name of the above, we will faithfully obey the ordinances and commands of this apostolic see.

Session 9—23 March 1440

[Monition of the council of Florence against the antipope Felix V]

Eugenius, bishop, servant of the servants of God, for an everlasting record. Many examples of holy fathers of the old and the new Testament warn us that we should not pass over in silence or leave completely unpunished specially grave crimes which lead to the scandal and public division of the people entrusted to us. For if we delay to pursue and avenge what is grievously offensive to God, we thereby provoke the divine patience to wrath. For, there are sins for which it is a sin to be slack about their retribution. It is indeed right and eminently reasonable, in the opinion of holy fathers, that those who despise divine commands and disobey paternal enactments should be corrected with really severe penalties, so that others may fear to commit the same faults and that all may rejoice in fraternal harmony and take note of the example of severity and probity. For if — though may it never be — we are negligent about ecclesiastical vigilance and activity, idleness ruins discipline and the souls of the faithful will suffer great harm. Therefore, rotting flesh should be cut away and mangy sheep driven out

He cannot have God as his father If he does not hold the unity of the church i he who does not agree with the body of the church and the whole brotherhood, cannot agree with anyone. Since Christ suffered for the church and since the church is the body of Christ, without doubt the person who divides the church is convicted of lacerating the body of Christ. Hence the avenging will of the Lord went forth against schismatics like Korah, Dathan and Abiram, who were swallowed up together by an opening in the ground for instigating schism against Moses, the man of God, and

others were consumed by fire from heaven; idolatry indeed was punished by the sword; and the burning of the book was requited by the slaughter of war and imprisonment in exile.

Finally, how indivisible is the sacrament of unity! How bereft of hope, and how punished by God's indignation with the direst loss, are those who produce schism and, abandoning the true spouse of the church, set up a pseudo-bishop! Divine scripture declares this in the book of Kings, which says that when ten tribes had separated themselves from the tribe of Judah and Benjamin and abandoned their king, setting up for themselves another king: the Lord was indignant with all the descendants of Israel and gave them over to destruction till he cast them away from his face. It says that the Lord was indignant and gave over to destruction those who split off from unity and set up for themselves another king. Indeed, so great was the wrath of God against those who had brought about a schism that even when the man of God had been sent to Jeroboam to reprove his sins and to predict a future vengeance, the man of God was forbidden to eat bread with them or to drink water and when he did not obey this order of the Lord and dined, straightaway the divine retribution struck him and he was killed by a lion on his return journey. Hence, as blessed Jerome declares, nobody should doubt that the crime of schism is very wicked since it is avenged so severely.

In days gone by, in the holy general council of Constance, that chronic and disastrous schism, which had cruelly and daily afflicted God's church and the Christian religion with great loss of souls, not only of individual persons but also in entire cities and provinces, was at last settled by the ineffable mercy of God and the unbounded labours and hardships of many kings and princes, both ecclesiastical and secular, many universities and others of Christ's faithful, and at great expense. With the election of lord Martin of happy memory and, after his death, the undisputed, genuine, unanimous and canonical elevation of your holiness to the summit of the apostolate, the universal church seemed to be enjoying a greatly desired peace. But behold! Again we are compelled with copious tears to say with Jeremiah the prophet: we looked for peace, but behold disturbance. And again with Isaiah: we looked for light, but behold darkness. Some sons of perdition and disciples of iniquity, who were few in numbers and of little authority, tried at Basel with all their strength, guile and cunning, even after the translation of the former council which had been made canonically and legitimately by your holiness for just, evident, urgent and necessary reasons, to prevent the most holy union with the Greeks and the whole eastern church, which was ardently desired by the whole Christian people.

For after the said authors of the scandals who remained in Basel had failed to fulfil their promise to the Greeks, when they learnt from the envoys of the Greeks and the eastern church that the most serene prince lord John Palaeologus, emperor of the Romans, and Joseph, patriarch of Constantinople of happy memory, with many other prelates and men of the eastern church were about to come to the place chosen for the ecumenical council, and that your holiness had despatched many prelates and envoys with galleys at great expense and outlay, they dared to decree, with a view to

preventing the arrival of the said emperor and Greeks, a detestable monition against your holiness and my most reverend lords, the lord cardinals of the holy Roman church.

Afterwards, when they learnt that the said emperor and patriarch and other easterners were coming, they issued against your holiness a kind of sacrilegious decree of suspension from the administration of the papacy.

Despite these and other wicked attempts and sacrilegious acts, on account of the constant solicitude displayed by you and this sacred council and after great labours and many disputations, at last the divine mercy granted that the above-mentioned schism of the Greeks and the eastern church, which had lasted for almost five hundred years to the great harm of the whole Christian people, should be removed from the midst of the church and that the most desired union of the western and the eastern church, which was hardly thought possible, should follow with the utmost harmony from your and this sacred council's holy work. This ought to be greatly admired and venerated with the highest praise and the joy of exultation, as all the rest of the Christian religion had done, and thanks should be returned to the most High for so admirable a gift. But they became more hard-hearted and obstinate, preferring even at the cost of ruining the whole Christian world to fan into flames the conflagration, which they had already begun, of their aforesaid most wicked monster. They adopted an attitude of opposition and, prodigal of their good name and enemies to their own honour, they strove to their utmost with pestilential daring to rend the unity of the holy Roman and universal church and the seamless robe of Christ', and with serpent-like bites to lacerate the womb of the pious and holy mother herself.

The leader and prince of these men and the architect of the whole nefarious deed was that first-born son of Satan, the most unfortunate Amadeus, once duke and prince of Savoy. He meditated this scheme for long. Several years ago, as is widely said, he was seduced by the trickery, soothsayings and phantoms of certain unfortunate men and women of low reputation (commonly called wizards or witches or Waldensians and said to be very numerous in his country), who had forsaken their Saviour to turn backwards to Satan and be deceived by demonic illusions, to have himself raised up to be a monstrous head in God's church. He adopted the cloak of a hermit, or rather of a most false hypocrite, so that in sheep's clothing, like a lamb he might assume the ferocity of a wolf. Eventually he joined the people at Basel. By force, fraud, bribery, promises and threats he prevailed on the majority of those at Basel, who were subject to his sway and tyranny, to proclaim him as an idol and Beelzebub, the prince of these new demons, in opposition to your holiness, the true vicar of Christ and the undoubted successor of Peter in God's church.

Thus that most ill-starred Amadeus, a man of insatiable and unheard of greed, whom avarice (which, according to the Apostle, is the service of idols) has always blinded, was set up as an idol and like a statue of Nebuchadnezzar in God's church by that most wicked synagogue, those offscourings of forsaken men, that shameful cesspool

of all Christianity, from among whom certain heinous men, or rather demons hiding under the form of men, had been deputed as electors or rather as profaners. He himself, agitated by the furies of his own crimes and sinking into the depth of all evils, said after the manner of Lucifer: I will set my throne in the north and I shall be like the most High. He grasped with avid and detestable greed at the above-mentioned election, or rather profanation made of him, which he had earlier sought with intense fever of mind and anguish of heart. He did not shrink from adopting and wearing papal robes, ornaments and insignia, from behaving, holding himself and acting as Roman and supreme pontiff, and from having himself venerated as such by the people. Further, he was not afraid to write and despatch to many parts of the world letters which were sealed with a leaden seal after the manner of the Roman pontiffs. By these letters, in which he calls himself Felix even though he is the most unhappy of mortals, he tries to spread the poisons of his faction among the people of Christ.

What complaint or accusation am I to make first, most blessed father and most holy synod? With what force of speech, grief of mind or outpouring of words am I to deplore so great a crime? What rich discourse could suitably bewail or express this most foul deed? Assuredly no account can equal the grossness of the act, for the magnitude of so heinous a crime transcends the power of speech.

But, as I see it, most blessed father and most reverend and reverend fathers, now is the hour not for lament but for remedy.

For behold, holy mother church was basking in true unity and peace, in the person of your holiness her undoubted spouse, when the fountain of tears was opened. To you, her spouse, and to you most reverend and reverend fathers, who share in solicitude and have been summoned to this sacred and ecumenical council, she is forced to cry and shout with many sighs and sobs: Have pity on me, have pity on me, at least you my fiends'. For my bowels are full of bitterness. For the foxes destroy the vineyard of the God of hosts, and the impious rend the seamless robe of Christ. Let God therefore arise, let all his enemies be scattered. And you, most blessed father, since all these things are so manifest, public and notorious that they cannot be hidden by any evasion or defended by excuses, arise in the power of the most High, together with this sacred council, and judge the cause of your spouse and be mindful of your sons. Gird your sword upon your thigh, O mighty one. Set out, proceed prosperously and reign, and say with the psalmist: I will pursue my enemies and crush them, and I shall not return until I consume them. I shall consume and crush them and they will not rise; they will fall at my feet. For it is wrong that so wicked a deed and so detestable a precedent should be allowed to pass by disguised, lest perhaps unpunished daring and malice find an imitator, but rather let the example of punished transgressions deter others from offending.

Therefore your holiness and this sacred synod, following the example of Moses the man of God, must say to the whole Christian people: Depart from the tents of these impious men. Follow also the example of blessed pope Leo, your predecessor, who

moved the second council of Ephesus and Dioscorus with his supporters to Chalcedon, where he instituted a synod which condemned them, and of your other predecessors as supreme pontiff, who continuously rising up in God's church have eliminated heresies and schisms, with their instigators, followers and supporters, from the church of God and the communion of the faithful, which is the most sacred body of Christ, and have afflicted them with many other condign penalties at the demand of justice.

With the approval and help of this sacred ecumenical council, avenge with condign penalties this new frenzy which has become inflamed to your injury and that of the holy Roman church, your spouse, and to the notorious scandal of the whole Christian people. By the authority of almighty God and of the blessed apostles Peter and Paul and by your own authority, remove and separate from God's holy church, by a perpetual anathema, the aforesaid wicked perpetrators of this prodigious crime and their unfortunate heresiarch and veritable antichrist in God's church together with all their supporters, adherents and followers and especially his execrable electors or rather profaners.

May he and all the aforesaid be cast out like an antichrist and an invader and a destroyer of the whole of Christianity. Let no appeal in this matter ever be allowed to him or to them. Let them and their posterity and successors be deprived without appeal of every ecclesiastical or secular rank and dignity whatsoever. Let all of them be condemned by a perpetual anathema and excommunication and may they be counted among the wicked who will not rise at the judgment. May they feel the anger of God against them. May they feel the rage of saints Peter and Paul, whose church they dare to throw into confusion, both in this life and in the next. May their dwelling be a desolation, let no one dwell in their tents. May their children be orphans and their wives be widows. May the world fight against them and all the elements be opposed to them, so that they may be cast out, destroyed and eliminated by all and so that, as they grovel in permanent penury, death may deservedly be their refuge and life their punishment. May the merits of all the saints cast them into confusion and display open vengeance on them in their lifetime. May they receive a deserved fate with Korah, Dathan and Abiram. Finally, unless they repent from their hearts, perform deeds worthy of repentance and make worthy satisfaction to your holiness and the universal church for the enormity of their sins, may they be thrust with the wicked into the everlasting darkness, doomed by the just judgment of God to eternal torments.

May the grace of almighty God protect all of us and all Christ's faithful who execrate with merited blasphemies the aforesaid heresiarchs and their abominable idol and antichrist, who acknowledge you as Christ's vicar and spouse of his most worthy church, and who venerate you with devout reverence and constant faith and obedience. By the authority of blessed Peter and Paul and your authority, may we and they be absolved from all bonds of sins, be filled with all blessings on our pilgrimage and finally be led by his ineffable mercy to eternal joys. Amen.

For our part, as soon as we were aware from the reports of trustworthy people that so great an impiety had been committed, we were afflicted with grief and sadness, as was to be expected, both for the great scandal to the church and for the ruin of the souls of its perpetrators, especially Amadeus that antichrist whom we used to embrace in the depths of charity and whose prayers and wishes we always strove to meet in so far as we could in God. Already for some time we had it in mind to provide salutary remedies, in accordance with our pastoral office, against an abomination of this sort. Now, however, challenged publicly before the church to confront these evils, we propose to rise to the defence of the church and tackle this great crime more quickly and more urgently. Therefore, in order that so enormous and execrable a deed may, with the help of God whose cause is at stake, be destroyed from its very roots, we are applying, in conjunction with this holy council and with the least possible delay, a remedy in accordance with the holy canons.

We are aware that the above petition of the promoter and the procurator is just and in conformity with both divine and human law, and although the aforesaid crimes and excesses are so very public and notorious that nothing can conceal them and no further information is required; Nevertheless, for greater precaution and certainly about the above, we commissioned, with the approval of this sacred council, some noteworthy persons from every rank in the council to seek information about the above and to refer their findings to us and the sacred council. Those so commissioned fulfilled their task of investigation with the care demanded by a schismatical depravity of this kind and faithfully reported to us and the sacred council in a synodal congregation what they had found out by the interrogation of trustworthy persons. In such public, manifest and notorious matters, action could have been taken against the said infamous and scandalous men without waiting further, by means of severe penalties in accordance with canonical sanctions. Nevertheless we and this holy synod, imitating the mercy of God who desires not the death of the sinner but rather that he be converted and live, have decided to show all possible mercy and to act, in so far as we can, in such a way that the proposed mildness may recall them to heart and lead them to recoil from the above-mentioned excesses, and so that when at last they return to the bosom of the church like the prodigal son, we may receive them with kindness and embrace them with fatherly love.

Therefore, through the tender mercy of our God and by the shedding of the precious blood of our lord Jesus Christ, in whom and by whom the redemption of the human race and the foundation of holy mother church were effected, from the depths of our hearts we exhort, beg and beseech the antichrist Amadeus and the aforesaid electors, or rather profaners, and whoever else believes in, adheres to, receives or in any way supports him, straightaway to stop violating the church's unity for which the Saviour prayed so earnestly to the Father, and to cease from rending and lacerating the fraternal charity and peace which the same Redeemer, as he was about to leave this world, repeatedly and so insistently commended to his disciples and without which neither prayers nor fasts nor alms are acceptable to God, and utterly to desist as quickly as possible from the aforesaid destructive and scandalous excesses, and so to

find with us and this sacred council, if they really obey as they are bound to do, the affection of a father in respect of everything.

However, so that fear of penalties and harshness of discipline may force them if perchance love of justice and virtue does not withdraw them from sin, with the approval of this sacred council we demand and warn the antichrist Amadeus and the aforesaid electors, or rather profaners, and believers, adherents, receivers and supporters, and we strictly enjoin and order him and them in virtue of holy obedience and under the penalties of anathema, heresy, schism and treason which have been inflicted in any ways against such persons, whether by men or by the law:

That within fifty days immediately following the publication of this letter, the antichrist Amadeus should cease from acting any more and designating himself as the Roman pontiff and should not, in so far as he can, allow himself to be held and called such by others, and should not dare hereafter in any way to use papal insignia and other things belonging in any way to the Roman pontiff; And that the aforesaid electors, or rather profaners, and adherents, receivers and supporters should no longer, either in person or through others, directly or indirectly or under any pretext, aid, believe in, adhere to or support the said Amadeus in this crime of schism.

Rather, both Amadeus himself and the aforesaid electors, believers, adherents and supporters should hold, recognize and reverence us as the true Roman pontiff and vicar of Christ and legitimate successor of Peter, and should reverently obey and maintain us as father and pastor of their souls, and should take care legitimately to notify us and this sacred council about these matters within the appointed interval of time, so that no scruple of doubt may remain about their genuine obedience.

If Amadeus and the said electors, believers, adherents, receivers and supporters shall act otherwise — though may it not be so — and do not effectively fulfil each and all of the aforesaid points within the appointed time, we wish and decree that from then as from now they automatically incur the stated penalties.

Moreover, on the fifteenth day after the aforesaid interval of time, if it is not a feast, otherwise on the following non-feast day, the aforesaid supporters all together or singly shall appear in person before us and the aforesaid council where we shall then be, to be seen and heard individually and even by name. Thus we now cite them for that day, to be declared schismatics, blasphemers and as heretics, to be punished as traitors, and to have incurred the aforesaid censures and penalties, and others to be inflicted, according as it shall seem good and justice shall persuade:

Notifying the same people and any of them individually, whether or not they come, that if they shall not have shown that they have obeyed, we shall proceed with justice to declaring the aforesaid penalties, notwithstanding their contumacy or absence, with the intention of proceeding further to aggravation and re-aggravation, as the rigour of justice shall demand and their merits require. In order that this monition and citation of ours may be brought to the attention of the authors of their

monition and citation and of other interested persons, we shall have sheets of paper or membranes of parchment containing it affixed to the doors or gates of the church of St Mary Novella in Florence, of our palace situated near that church and of the cathedral church of Florence. These will make known this monition as if by a sonorous town-crying and a public notice, in order that after such notification these people may not be able to pretend that it did not reach them or that they were ignorant of it, since it is unlikely that what is made known so obviously to all should remain unknown or hidden to them.

We wish and we decree by our apostolic authority that this our monition promulgated on the said doors and gates shall have as much value and be as immutable and as binding on the said warned people, notwithstanding any contrary constitution, as if it had been intimated and disclosed to each and all of the warned people in person and in their presence.

Finally, lest the aforesaid warned and cited persons allege as a cloak of excuse that the council and the Roman curia, the common fatherland of all, is an unsafe place for them and that, because of the above-mentioned things or other enmities or other reasons, danger threatens them in their coming, staying and returning, we reassure them by this present letter and we require and exhort by the same letter all patriarchs, archbishops, bishops and other prelates of churches and monasteries, clerics and ecclesiastical persons as well as dukes, marquises, princes, rulers, captains and any other officials and their lieutenants, as also the communities and corporations of cities, castles, towns, vills and other places, and we strictly command the patriarchs, archbishops, bishops and other prelates and our other subjects that they are not to inflict any injury or harm on the aforesaid warned persons and their goods and property nor, to the best of their power, to allow such to be inflicted by others. Let nobody therefore . . . If anyone however . . .

Session 10—27 May 1440

[Eugenius IV exhorts the members of the synod at Basel to desist from their opposition]

Eugenius, bishop, servant of the servants of God, for an everlasting record. In the opinion of holy fathers, public sinners ought to be publicly censured so that others may stand in fear. Accordingly, we and this sacred council of Florence recently censured and denounced in public before the church, in synodal form, the authors and abettors of the pestilential sin of schism against the holy apostolic see and the holy Roman church, the mother and mistress of all Christians, which was perpetrated by Amadeus, once duke of Savoy, and his accomplices. It would have been in conformity with the sacred canons to have passed a sentence of due severity straightaway on those notoriously sacrilegious persons. However, desiring their conversion and salvation rather than their punishment, we begged, warned and

required of them, with all the charity and mildness we could, to reflect and to recoil from such great iniquity, promising them pardon and favour and a father's affection. But if they refused to heed these dutiful admonitions, we decreed that they should be punished with penalties proportionate to so great an outrage, as is contained in the monition promulgated against them, which is as follows.

Session 11—4 February 1442

[Bull of union with the Copts]

Eugenius, bishop, servant of the servants of God, for an everlasting record. Sing praises to the Lord for he has done gloriously; let this be known in all the earth. Shout, and sing for joy, O inhabitant of Zion, for great in your midst is the holy one of Israel. To sing and to exult in the Lord certainly befits the church of God for his great magnificence and the glory of his name, which the most merciful God has deigned to bring about on this very day. It is right, indeed, to praise and bless with all our hearts our Saviour, who daily builds up his holy church with new additions. His benefactions to his Christian people are at all times many and great and manifest more clearly than the light of day his immense love for us. Yet if we look more closely at the benefactions which the divine mercy has deigned to effect in most recent times, we shall assuredly be able to judge that in these days of ours the gifts of his love have been more in number and greater in kind than in many past ages.

For in less than three years our lord Jesus Christ by his indefatigable kindness, to the common and lasting joy of the whole of Christianity, has generously effected in this holy ecumenical synod the most salutary union of three great nations. Hence it has come about that nearly the whole of the east that adores the glorious name of Christ and no small part of the north, after prolonged discord with the holy Roman church, have come together in the same bond of faith and love. For first the Greeks and those subject to the four patriarchal sees, which cover many races and nations and tongues, then the Armenians, who are a race of many peoples, and today indeed the Jacobites, who are a great people in Egypt, have been united with the holy apostolic see.

Nothing is more pleasing to our Saviour, the lord Jesus Christ, than mutual love among people and nothing can give more glory to his name and advantage to the church than that Christians, with all discord between them banished, should come together in the same purity of faith. Deservedly all of us ought to sing for joy and to exult in the Lord; we whom the divine clemency has made worthy to see in our days such great splendour of the Christian faith. With the greatest readiness we therefore announce these marvellous facts to the whole Christian world, so that just as we are filled with unspeakable joy for the glory of God and the exaltation of the church, we may make others participate in this great happiness. Thus all of us with one voice may magnify and glorify God and may return abundant and daily thanks, as is

fitting, to his majesty for so many and so great marvellous benefits bestowed on his holy church in this age. He who diligently does the work of God not only awaits merit and reward in heaven but also deserves generous glory and praise among people. Therefore we consider that our venerable brother John, patriarch of the Jacobites, whose zeal for this holy union is immense, should deservedly be praised and extolled by us and the whole church and deserves, together with his whole race, the general approval of all Christians. Moved by us, through our envoy and our letter, to send an embassy to us and this sacred synod and to unite himself and his people in the same faith with the Roman church, he sent to us and this synod the beloved son Andrew, an Egyptian, endowed in no mean degree with faith and morals and abbot of the monastery of St Anthony in Egypt, in which St Anthony himself is said to have lived and died. The patriarch, fired with great zeal, ordered and commissioned him reverently to accept, in the name of the patriarch and his Jacobites, the doctrine of the faith that the Roman church holds and preaches, and afterwards to bring this doctrine to the patriarch and the Jacobites so that they might acknowledge and formally approve it and preach it in their lands.

We, therefore, to whom the Lord gave the task of feeding Christ's sheep', had abbot Andrew carefully examined by some outstanding men of this sacred council on the articles of the faith, the sacraments of the church and certain other matters pertaining to salvation. At length, after an exposition of the catholic faith to the abbot, as far as this seemed to be necessary, and his humble acceptance of it, we have delivered in the name of the Lord in this solemn session, with the approval of this sacred ecumenical council of Florence, the following true and necessary doctrine.

First, then, the holy Roman church, founded on the words of our Lord and Saviour, firmly believes, professes and preaches one true God, almighty, immutable and eternal, Father, Son and holy Spirit; one in essence, three in persons; unbegotten Father, Son begotten from the Father, holy Spirit proceeding from the Father and the Son; the Father is not the Son or the holy Spirit, the Son is not the Father or the holy Spirit, the holy Spirit is not the Father or the Son; the Father is only the Father, the Son is only the Son, the holy Spirit is only the holy Spirit. The Father alone from his substance begot the Son; the Son alone is begotten of the Father alone; the holy Spirit alone proceeds at once from the Father and the Son. These three persons are one God not three gods, because there is one substance of the three, one essence, one nature, one Godhead, one immensity, one eternity, and everything is one where the difference of a relation does not prevent this. Because of this unity the Father is whole in the Son, whole in the holy Spirit; the Son is whole in the Father, whole in the holy Spirit; the holy Spirit is whole in the Father, whole in the Son. No one of them precedes another in eternity or excels in greatness or surpasses in power. The existence of the Son from the Father is certainly eternal and without beginning, and the procession of the holy Spirit from the Father and the Son is eternal and without beginning. Whatever the Father is or has, he has not from another but from himself and is principle without principle. Whatever the Son is or has, he has from the Father and is principle from principle. Whatever the holy Spirit is or has, he has from the Father together with the Son. But the Father and the Son are not two

principles of the holy Spirit, but one principle, just as the Father and the Son and the holy Spirit are not three principles of creation but one principle. Therefore it condemns, reproves, anathematizes and declares to be outside the body of Christ, which is the church, whoever holds opposing or contrary views. Hence it condemns Sabellius, who confused the persons and altogether removed their real distinction. It condemns the Arians, the Eunomians and the Macedonians who say that only the Father is true God and place the Son and the holy Spirit in the order of creatures. It also condemns any others who make degrees or inequalities in the Trinity.

Most firmly it believes, professes and preaches that the one true God, Father, Son and holy Spirit, is the creator of all things that are, visible and invisible, who, when he willed it, made from his own goodness all creatures, both spiritual and corporeal, good indeed because they are made by the supreme good, but mutable because they are made from nothing, and it asserts that there is no nature of evil because every nature, in so far as it is a nature, is good. It professes that one and the same God is the author of the old and the new Testament — that is, the law and the prophets, and the gospel — since the saints of both testaments spoke under the inspiration of the same Spirit. It accepts and venerates their books, whose titles are as follows.

Five books of Moses, namely Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy; Joshua, Judges, Ruth, four books of Kings, two of Paralipomenon, Esdras, Nehemiah, Tobit, Judith, Esther, Job, Psalms of David, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Baruch, Ezechiel, Daniel; the twelve minor prophets, namely Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi; two books of the Maccabees; the four gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John; fourteen letters of Paul, to the Romans, two to the Corinthians, to the Galatians, to the Ephesians, to the Philippians, two to the Thessalonians, to the Colossians, two to Timothy, to Titus, to Philemon, to the Hebrews; two letters of Peter, three of John, one of James, one of Jude; Acts of the Apostles; Apocalypse of John.

Hence it anathematizes the madness of the Manichees who posited two first principles, one of visible things, the other of invisible things, and said that one was the God of the new Testament, the other of the old Testament. It firmly believes, professes and preaches that one person of the Trinity, true God, Son of God begotten by the Father, consubstantial and coeternal with the Father, in the fullness of time which the inscrutable depth of divine counsel determined, for the salvation of the human race, took a real and complete human nature from the immaculate womb of the virgin Mary, and joined it to himself in a personal union of such great unity that whatever is of God there, is not separated from man, and whatever is human is not divided from the Godhead, and he is one and the same undivided, each nature perduring in its properties, God and man, Son of God and son of man, equal to the Father according to his divinity, less than the Father according to his humanity, immortal and eternal through the nature of the Godhead, passible and temporal from the condition of assumed humanity. It firmly believes, professes and preaches that the Son of God was truly born of the virgin in his assumed humanity, truly suffered,

truly died and was buried, truly rose from the dead, ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father and will come at the end of time to judge the living and the dead. It anathematizes, execrates and condemns every heresy that is tainted with the contrary. First it condemns Ebion, Cerinthus, Marcion, Paul of Samosata, Photinus and all similar blasphemers who, failing to see the personal union of the humanity with the Word, denied that our lord Jesus Christ was true God and professed him to be simply a man who by a greater participation in divine grace, which he had received through the merit of his holier life, should be called a divine man.

It anathematizes also Manes and his followers who, imagining that the Son of God took to himself not a real body but a phantasmal one completely rejected the truth of the humanity in Christ, Valentinus, who declared that the Son of God took nothing from his virgin mother but that he assumed a heavenly body and passed through the virgin's womb like water flowing down an aqueduct; Arius, who by his assertion that the body taken from the virgin had no soul, wanted the Deity to take the place of the soul; and Apollinarius who, realizing that if the soul informing the body were denied there would be no true humanity in Christ, posited only a sensitive soul and held that the deity of the Word took the place of the rational soul. It anathematizes also Theodore of Mopsuestia and Nestorius, who asserted that the humanity was united to the Son of God through grace, and hence that there are two persons in Christ just as they profess there are two natures, since they could not understand that the union of the humanity to the Word was hypostatic and therefore they denied that he had received the subsistence of the Word. For according to this blasphemy the Word was not made flesh but the Word dwelt in flesh through grace, that is, the Son of God did not become man but rather the Son of God dwelt in a man. It also anathematizes, execrates and condemns the archimandrite Eutyches who, when he understood that the blasphemy of Nestorius excluded the truth of the incarnation, and that it was therefore necessary for the humanity to be so united to the Word of God that there should be one and the same person of the divinity and the humanity; and also because, granted the plurality of natures, he could not grasp the unity of the person, since he posited one person in Christ of divinity and humanity; so he affirmed that there was one nature, suggesting that before the union there was a duality of natures which passed into a single nature in the act of assumption, thereby conceding a great blasphemy and impiety that either the humanity was converted into the divinity or the divinity into the humanity. It also anathematizes, execrates and condemns Macarius of Antioch and all others of similar views who, although they are orthodox on the duality of natures and the unity of person, yet have gone enormously wrong on Christ's principles of action by declaring that of the two natures in Christ, there was only one principle of action and one will. The holy Roman church anathematizes all of these and their heresies and affirms that in Christ there are two wills and two principles of action.

It firmly believes, professes and preaches that never was anyone, conceived by a man and a woman, liberated from the devil's dominion except by faith in our lord Jesus Christ, the mediator between God and humanity, who was conceived without

sin, was born and died. He alone by his death overthrew the enemy of the human race, canceling our sins, and unlocked the entrance to the heavenly kingdom, which the first man by his sin had locked against himself and all his posterity. All the holy sacrifices sacraments and ceremonies of the old Testament had prefigured that he would come at some time.

It firmly believes, professes and teaches that the legal prescriptions of the old Testament or the Mosaic law, which are divided into ceremonies, holy sacrifices and sacraments, because they were instituted to signify something in the future, although they were adequate for the divine cult of that age, once our lord Jesus Christ who was signified by them had come, came to an end and the sacraments of the new Testament had their beginning. Whoever, after the passion, places his hope in the legal prescriptions and submits himself to them as necessary for salvation and as if faith in Christ without them could not save, sins mortally. It does not deny that from Christ's passion until the promulgation of the gospel they could have been retained, provided they were in no way believed to be necessary for salvation. But it asserts that after the promulgation of the gospel they cannot be observed without loss of eternal salvation. Therefore it denounces all who after that time observe circumcision, the sabbath and other legal prescriptions as strangers to the faith of Christ and unable to share in eternal salvation, unless they recoil at some time from these errors. Therefore it strictly orders all who glory in the name of Christian, not to practise circumcision either before or after baptism, since whether or not they place their hope in it, it cannot possibly be observed without loss of eternal salvation.

With regard to children, since the danger of death is often present and the only remedy available to them is the sacrament of baptism by which they are snatched away from the dominion of the devil and adopted as children of God, it admonishes that sacred baptism is not to be deferred for forty or eighty days or any other period of time in accordance with the usage of some people, but it should be conferred as soon as it conveniently can; and if there is imminent danger of death, the child should be baptized straightaway without any delay, even by a lay man or a woman in the form of the church, if there is no priest, as is contained more fully in the decree on the Armenians.

It firmly believes, professes and teaches that every creature of God is good and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, because according to the word of the Lord not what goes into the mouth defiles a person, and because the difference in the Mosaic law between clean and unclean foods belongs to ceremonial practices, which have passed away and lost their efficacy with the coming of the gospel. It also declares that the apostolic prohibition, to abstain from what has been sacrificed to idols and from blood and from what is strangled, was suited to that time when a single church was rising from Jews and gentiles, who previously lived with different ceremonies and customs. This was so that the gentiles should have some observances in common with Jews, and occasion would be offered of coming together in one worship and faith of God and a cause of dissension might be removed, since by ancient custom blood and strangled things seemed abominable to

Jews, and gentiles could be thought to be returning to idolatry if they ate sacrificial food. In places, however, where the Christian religion has been promulgated to such an extent that no Jew is to be met with and all have joined the church, uniformly practising the same rites and ceremonies of the gospel and believing that to the clean all things are clean, since the cause of that apostolic prohibition has ceased, so its effect has ceased. It condemns, then, no kind of food that human society accepts and nobody at all neither man nor woman, should make a distinction between animals, no matter how they died; although for the health of the body, for the practice of virtue or for the sake of regular and ecclesiastical discipline many things that are not proscribed can and should be omitted, as the apostle says all things are lawful, but not all are helpful.

It firmly believes, professes and preaches that all those who are outside the catholic church, not only pagans but also Jews or heretics and schismatics, cannot share in eternal life and will go into the everlasting fire which was prepared for the devil and his angels, unless they are joined to the catholic church before the end of their lives; that the unity of the ecclesiastical body is of such importance that only for those who abide in it do the church's sacraments contribute to salvation and do fasts, almsgiving and other works of piety and practices of the Christian militia produce eternal rewards; and that nobody can be saved, no matter how much he has given away in alms and even if he has shed his blood in the name of Christ, unless he has persevered in the bosom and the unity of the catholic church.

It embraces, approves and accepts the holy synod of 318 fathers at Nicaea, which was convened in the time of our predecessor most blessed Silvester and the great and most pious emperor Constantine. In it the impious Arian heresy and its author was condemned and there was defined that the Son of God is consubstantial and coeternal with the Father. It also embraces, approves and accepts the holy synod of 150 fathers at Constantinople, which was convoked in the time of our predecessor most blessed Damasus and the elder Theodosius and which anathematized the impious error of Macedonius, who asserted that the holy Spirit is not God but a creature. Those whom they condemn, it condemns; what they approve, it approves; and in every respect it wants what was defined there to remain unchanged and inviolate.

It also embraces, approves and accepts the first holy synod of 200 fathers at Ephesus, which is third in the order of universal synods and was convoked under our predecessor most blessed Celestine and the younger Theodosius. In it the blasphemy of the impious Nestorius was condemned, and there was defined that the person of our lord Jesus Christ, true God and true man, is one and that the blessed ever-virgin Mary should be preached by the whole church not only as Christ-bearer but also as God-bearer, that is as mother of God as well as mother of the man.

But it condemns, anathematizes and rejects the impious second synod of Ephesus, which was convened under our predecessor most blessed Leo and the aforesaid emperor. In it Dioscorus, bishop of Alexandria, defender of the heresiarch Eutyches

and impious persecutor of holy Flavian, bishop of Constantinople, with cunning and threat led the execrable synod to an approval of the Eutychian impiety.

It also embraces, approves and accepts the holy synod of 630 fathers at Chalcedon, which is fourth in the order of universal synods and was held in the time of our predecessor most blessed Leo and the emperor Marcian. In it the Eutychian heresy and its author Eutyches and its defender Dioscorus were condemned, and there was defined that our lord Jesus Christ is true God and true man and that in the one and same person the divine and human natures remain entire, inviolate, incorrupt, unconfused and distinct, the humanity doing what befits man, the divinity what befits God. Those whom they condemn, it condemns; those whom they approve, it approves.

It also embraces, approves and accepts the fifth holy synod, the second of Constantinople, which was held in the time of our predecessor most blessed Vigilius and the emperor Justinian. In it the definition of the sacred council of Chalcedon about the two natures and the one person of Christ was renewed and many errors of Origen and his followers, especially about the penitence and liberation of demons and other condemned beings, were refuted and condemned.

It also embraces, approves and accepts the third holy synod of 150 fathers at Constantinople, which is sixth in the order of universal synods and was convened in the time of our predecessor most blessed Agatho and the emperor Constantine IV. In it the heresy of Macarius of Antioch and his adherents was condemned, and there was defined that in our lord Jesus Christ there are two perfect and complete natures and two principles of action and also two wills, although there is one and the same person to whom the actions of each of the two natures belong, the divinity doing what is of God, the humanity doing what is human.

It also embraces, approves and accepts all other universal synods which were legitimately summoned, celebrated and confirmed by the authority of a Roman pontiff, and especially this holy synod of Florence, in which, among other things, most holy unions with the Greeks and the Armenians have been achieved and many most salutary definitions in respect of each of these unions have been issued, as is contained in full in the decrees previously promulgated, which are as follows: Let the heavens be glad . . . 1; Exult in God . 2

However, since no explanation was given in the aforesaid decree of the Armenians in respect of the form of words which the holy Roman church, relying on the teaching and authority of the apostles Peter and Paul, has always been wont to use in the consecration of the Lord's body and blood, we concluded that it should be inserted in this present text. It uses this form of words in the consecration of the Lord's body: For this is my body. And of his blood: For this is the chalice of my blood, of the new and everlasting covenant, which will be shed for you and for many unto the remission of sins .

Whether the wheat bread, in which the sacrament is confectioned, has been baked on the same day or earlier is of no importance whatever. For, provided the substance of bread remains, there should be no doubt at all that after the aforesaid words of consecration of the body have been pronounced by a priest with the intention of consecrating, immediately it is changed in substance into the true body of Christ.

It is asserted that some people reject fourth marriages as condemned. Lest sin is attributed where it does not exist, since the apostle says that a wife on her husband's death is free from his law and free in the Lord to marry whom she wishes, and since no distinction is made between the deaths of the first, second and third husbands, we declare that not only second and third marriages but also fourth and further ones may lawfully be contracted, provided there is no canonical impediment. We say, however, that they would be more commendable if thereafter they abstain from marriage and persevere in chastity because we consider that, just as virginity is to be preferred in praise and merit to widowhood, so chaste widowhood is preferable to marriage.

After all these explanations the aforesaid abbot Andrew, in the name of the aforesaid patriarch and of himself and of all the Jacobites, receives and accepts with all devotion and reverence this most salutary synodal decree with all its chapters, declarations, definitions traditions, precepts and statutes and all the doctrine contained therein, and also whatever the holy apostolic see and the Roman church holds and teaches. He also reverently accepts those doctors and holy fathers whom the Roman church approves, and he holds as rejected and condemned whatever persons and things the Roman church rejects and condemns, promising as a son of true obedience, in the name of the above persons, faithfully and always to obey the regulations and commands of the said apostolic see.

Session 12—14 October 1443

[Eugenius IV convokes the Lateran council, that is, the continuation of the council of Florence]

Eugenius. Convocation of the Lateran council. For an everlasting record. By the infinite clemency and pity of the redeemer of the human race, our God and lord Jesus Christ, by whose ineffable providence the whole body of the church is sanctified and ruled and through whose aid — which surpasses our merits and exceeds what we recognise ourselves as worthy either to seek or to solicit — gifts and favours of his mercy daily come to us, we have returned to bountiful Rome, the see of most blessed Peter, to the holy of holies, the Lateran of the patriarchs. With great trust we are embracing and earnestly pursuing the things which seem to be promoted and revealed by divine rather than by human wisdom. Hence it is that because of various just, reasonable and necessary causes which then moved our mind, by apostolic authority and the plenitude of power and with the approval of the

council, we transferred the holy ecumenical council of Florence, over which we were then presiding, to this bountiful city of Rome and the Lateran basilica, to be re-established and continued on the first day following the fifteenth day after our arrival, as is contained in more detail in the letter composed for that purpose, whose text is word for word as follows:

Eugenius, bishop, servant of the servants of God, for an everlasting record The compassionate and merciful Lord ordained that his only-begotten Son should assume a human nature and should so join it to himself into a single person that not only would fallen nature be repaired by virtue of that ineffable union, but also by his embrace as spouse and by the kiss of his mouth his bride the holy church would be brought forth, her members would be joined together by a solid bond of love, and the Christian people would acquire peace in harmony, salvation in a unity of spirit, and glory in the bond of charity.

In so far as it is granted to us by the mercy of our lord and saviour Jesus Christ, whose place we though unworthy take on earth, we, following in his footsteps, ardently desire and intensely pursue the salvation, unity and peace of the Christian people. Therefore we are intent, with a deserved watchfulness, on the conservation of this holy ecumenical council. In it, by the marvellous kindness and mercy of the same Saviour, very many most noteworthy works have been achieved for his praise and glory, the increase of the catholic faith, the unity of the Christian people and the exaltation of the holy apostolic see and the Roman church. For in our own days we have seen Greeks, Armenians, Jacobites and other almost innumerable peoples, some of whom have been separated from the rite and the holy teaching of the Roman church for almost five hundred or even seven hundred years, joined with us in this sacred council, by God's mercy, under one divine law of truth and embracing us with due reverence as the true vicar of Christ, the successor of Peter and the shepherd of the universal church.

There are no limits to the kindness of our Saviour, who works for the unity of the Christian people and his mystical body, for which he prayed: I wish, Father, that they may be one even as we are one. Indeed we are experiencing his kindness particularly in these times. For his infinite mercy has granted that we are now awaiting the arrival of envoys, furnished with full power to accept in this holy council the doctrine of the orthodox faith from which their peoples have gone astray in many points, from our most dear son in Christ Zar'a Ya'qob, king of Ethiopia, commonly called Prester John, to whom very many kings and almost innumerable peoples are subject and who is impelled, as we trust, by divine inspiration. To foster and hasten such a holy and divine proposal, which is so necessary for the whole of Christianity, we have sent our own nuncios and envoys, who are full of zeal for this holy task and have considerable influence with the said most powerful king.

Many more works have been proposed to us for the praise of God and the increase of the faith and the Christian people. We wish to give careful attention to them. Frightened by neither the heavy expenses nor the many labours, we put our trust in

the power of him whose inspiration motivates us. Let us hope, moreover, that in the course of time many other desirable and salutary fruits will accrue to the catholic faith and the church of Christ, especially if this holy synod is held in a place of greater importance and in a royal and sacerdotal city. To the genial city of Rome, which is particularly our city and which, as is right, we want to participate and help in these salutary and divine tasks, we have turned our attention, a city which we consider to be abounding in all spiritual and temporal goods and more holy and outstanding than all other cities for carrying out these holy tasks and bringing them to a religious and happy conclusion. For in it our Saviour in his eternal providence settled the apostolic see in blessed Peter, prince of all the apostles, and on his right in fellowship the wondrous foresight of the same Saviour added the blessed apostle Paul. They are two bulwarks of the faith through whom the gospel shone in Rome; they are true fathers and true pastors; they are those who suffered on one day for merit, in one place for grace, under one persecutor for equal virtue, and made this city sacerdotal and royal and the capital of the world, as being the holy seat of Peter, and consecrated it to the lord Christ with the glorious blood of martyrdom. "For the Roman church founded all, whether the eminence of a patriarch or the seats of metropolitan primacy or of bishoprics or the dignities of churches of whatever rank; he alone, who entrusted to blessed Peter, the key-bearer of eternal life, the rights of the heavenly as well as of the earthly kingdom, founded the Roman church and straightaway set it on the rock of nascent faith." Since, then, the city of Rome has been ennobled and distinguished by so many and so great divine gifts and is resplendent with so much authority and also draws the faithful to itself from all sides by the relics and sanctity of apostles, martyrs and confessors; since Christian nations and peoples even in the furthest parts of the world flock to the said city and are seen to desire greatly that we return to our see, which has been divinely constituted for Roman pontiffs, in order that a greater veneration and devotion may grow in the Christian people towards both us, through the authority of the said see, and the said see, through our presence and authority, and since we are informed that, on account of our residence in Rome, subjects and faithful of ours and of the Roman church, whose peace and tranquillity we are bound to procure and preserve with special zeal, will enjoy much greater peace and unity and that in this way, with God's blessing, we shall be more expeditious and effective in pursuing works of peace and harmony and in arranging and confirming, as we ardently desire, peace and unity among other catholic kings and princes and peoples; Therefore to Rome, which is a suitable and safe place fulfilling all human needs as regards fertility of the soil and sea transport; under the influence of the above-mentioned necessary causes and many other just and reasonable ones which direct our mind to the praise and glory of almighty God, the extirpation of heresies and errors, the reform of morals, the peace, salvation and increase of the Christian people and the prosecution of other holy works, under the Lord's leadership, for which the said council was originally convened;

In the name of the holy and undivided Trinity, Father, Son and holy Spirit, with the approval of the said general council given on 5 January last, in a general congregation under our presidency, by apostolic authority and by this present letter, we translate as from now this holy ecumenical council of Florence, and by the same

authority and the same letter we have decreed and declared it to be translated to the Lateran basilica, which is the first and proper seat of the supreme pontiff and the vicar of Jesus Christ, to be resumed, continued and prosecuted on the day following the fifteenth day after our entry into bountiful Rome. In addition, by an inviolable constitution and decree we ordain that each and all of the securities and safe-conducts, which we granted at the beginning of this sacred council and which we are extending anew and prolonging, are to be considered as included in this present letter and as having the same force and effect as if they had been mentioned word for word in this our synodal constitution and had been inserted and denoted in it. Let nobody therefore . . . If anyone however . . .

Now that the appointed day has come and all the reasons for which it had then seemed necessary to resume the council are recognised to be more than ever necessary, with the said necessary reasons and many other just and reasonable ones impelling us, for the praise and glory of almighty God, the extirpation of heresies and errors, the reform of morals, the peace, salvation and increase of the Christian people, and the completion of other holy works, under the Lord's leadership, for which the aforesaid council was originally convened;

In the name of the holy and undivided Trinity, Father, Son and holy Spirit, by the same authority and power, with the same approval and by this present letter; We resume, continue and carry forward the aforesaid ecumenical council of Florence, which was translated as above, and we decree and declare by this present letter that this continuation, resumption and prosecution is taking place in this council hall of the sacred Lateran patriarchate. We warn and require each and all of those who are bound by law or custom to take part in general councils that they should come as quickly as possible to this present holy ecumenical Lateran council, as referred to above, which is continuing for the attainment of the above-mentioned ends. In addition, we ordain again by this constitution and decree that each and all of the securities and safe-conducts, which we granted at the beginning of the sacred ecumenical council of Ferrara and which we are extending anew and prolonging, are to be considered as included in this present letter and as having the same force and effect as if they had been mentioned word for word in this our synodal constitution and had been inserted and denoted in

Let nobody therefore . . . if anyone however . . .

Session 13—30 November 1444

[Bull of union with the Syrians]

Eugenius, bishop, servant of the servants of God, for an everlasting record. In these our days the ineffable clemency of divine mercy bestows on his holy church many and marvellous gifts which are much greater than we could have asked for or

envisaged. Hence we see that the orthodox faith is expanded, new peoples daily return to the obedience of the apostolic see and reasons for joy and exaltation are daily being multiplied for us and all Christ's faithful, in such wise that we are deservedly incited time and again to say in jubilation with the prophet to the faithful peoples: Come, let us exult in the Lord, let us hail the God who saves us, for the Lord is great and most worthy of praise in the city of our God, on his holy mountain. It is true that in the catholic church, which is the city of God on the holy mountain and is founded on the authority of the apostolic see and Peter, God, whose omnipotence and wisdom knows no limits, has always worked great and inscrutable deeds. But the singular and special gift which the ineffable providence of its founder bestowed on it is that the orthodox faith, which alone gives life to and sanctifies the human race, should abide for ever on that holy mountain in a unique and unchangeable profession of faith and that dissents, which arise against the church from the variety of earthly opinions and separate people off from the firmness of that rock, should return to that mountain and be exterminated and eradicated. Whence it comes about that the peoples and nations thronging to its bosom agree with it in one truth of faith. Assuredly it is not from our merit that the immensity of divine goodness has granted us to behold these great sublime and marvellous gifts of God. His benevolence and condescension alone have granted that after the union of the Greeks in the sacred ecumenical council of Florence, who were seen to differ from the Roman church in some articles, and after the return of the Armenians and the Jacobites, who were entangled in various opinions, they should at last, having abandoned all dissent, come together into the one right way of truth. Behold now again with the Lord's help other nations have gathered from afar, inhabitants of Mesopotamia between the Tigris and the Euphrates, whose thinking about the procession of the holy Spirit and some other articles had gone astray.

Great, then, for us and for all Christ's faithful is the reason for rejoicing. For with the Lord's approval the most illustrious profession of the Roman church about the truth of the faith, which has always been pure from all stain of error shines with new beams also in the east beyond the bounds of the Euphrates inasmuch as it has drawn our venerable brother Abdala, archbishop of Edessa and legate of our venerable brother Ignatius, patriarch of the Syrians, and of his whole nation, to us here in bountiful Rome and to this sacred ecumenical Lateran council and has bidden him humbly and devoutly to petition that we give to them the rule of faith which the holy Roman church professes. Among all the preoccupations of the holy apostolic see, we hold, as we have always done, our first and chiefest care to be the defence of the faith, the extermination of heresies and the propagation of the orthodox faith. Therefore we selected some of our venerable brethren, cardinals of the holy Roman church, who in turn co-opted from this sacred council some masters in holy scripture, to confer with the aforesaid archbishop about the difficulties, doubts and errors of that nation, to examine him in person and to open to him the rule of catholic truth, and finally to instruct and inform him fully about the integrity of the faith of the Roman church.

They found him orthodox on all points of faith and practice except three articles: namely, the procession of the holy Spirit, the two natures in Jesus Christ our saviour, the two wills and principles of action in him. They laid before him the truth of the orthodox faith, opened up the meaning of the sacred scriptures, adduced the testimonies of holy doctors and added telling and pertinent reasons.

When the archbishop had understood the doctrine on these points, he affirmed that all his doubts had been completely answered. He professed that he thought he fully understood the truth of the faith as regards both the procession of the holy Spirit and the two natures, two wills and two principles of action in our lord Jesus Christ. Moreover he declared that he would accept, in the name of the aforesaid patriarch and of the whole nation and of himself, the whole faith and all the teaching which we, with the approval of this sacred council, would propose to him.

For this reason we were filled with exultation in Christ and poured out immense gratitude to our God, since we are seeing our desire for the salvation of that nation fulfilled.

After careful discussion with our brethren and the sacred council, we decided, with the approval of the same council, to propose and assign to the said archbishop, who will accept it in the name of the above persons, the faith and doctrine which the holy Roman mother church holds.

This, then, is the faith which the holy Roman mother church has always held, preached and taught and which she now holds, preaches, professes and teaches. This is the faith, as regards those three articles, which we decree that the said archbishop Abdala, on behalf and in the name of the said patriarch of the Syrians and of all that nation and of himself, shall accept and shall keep for ever. First, that the holy Spirit is eternally from the Father and the Son, and has his essence and his subsistent being from the Father together with the Son, and proceeds from both eternally as from one principle and a single spiration.

Also it holds, professes and teaches that one and the same Son of God and of man, our lord Jesus Christ, is perfect in divinity and perfect in humanity; true God and true man, of a rational soul and a body; consubstantial with the Father as regards his divinity, consubstantial with us as regards his humanity; like us in all respects except for sin; begotten before the ages from the Father, and in the last days the same born according to his humanity for us and our salvation from Mary the virgin mother of God; one and the same Christ true only-begotten Son of God, acknowledged in two natures which undergo no confusion, no change, no division, no separation; at no point was the difference between the natures taken away through the union, but rather the property of both natures is preserved and comes together into a single person and a single subsistent being; he is not parted or divided into two persons, but is one and the same Son of God and of man, our lord Jesus Christ.

Also it believes, professes and teaches in the one lord Jesus Christ two natural principles of action which undergo no division, no change, no separation, no confusion, in accordance with the teaching of the holy fathers; and two natural wills one divine, the other human, not in opposition, but his human will subject to his divine and all powerful will. For in the same way that his most holy animate flesh was made divine, not destroyed, but remained in its own limit and category, so his human will was made divine, not destroyed, but rather was preserved and perfected.

We decree that the said archbishop Abdala ought, in the name of the above persons, to accept this faith, to hold it in his heart and to profess it with his mouth. Further we ordain and decree that he ought to receive and embrace, in the name of the above persons, whatever has been defined and established at various times by the holy Roman church, especially the decrees on the Greeks, the Armenians and the Jacobites, which were issued in the sacred ecumenical council of Florence and which, since Archbishop Abdala has carefully read them translated into Arabic and praised them, we have given to him, in the name of the above persons, for a wider and more complete instruction on everything; that whatever doctors and holy fathers the holy Roman church approves and accepts, he should, in the name of the above persons, approve and accept; and that whatever persons and other things she condemns and rejects, he should, in the name of the above persons, hold as condemned and rejected; promising on oath as a true son of obedience, in the name of the above persons, always devoutly and faithfully to obey the regulations and orders of the said apostolic see. If anyone however . . . Let nobody therefore . . .

Session 14—7 August 1445

[Bull of union with the Chaldeans and the Maronites of Cyprus]

Eugenius, bishop, servant of the servants of God, for an everlasting record. Blessed be the God and Father of our lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all consolation, who daily promotes with many great favours, and accompanies with happy results far beyond our deserts, our aims and pious desires, whereby in fulfilment of our pastoral duties we long for and foster with many works, in so far as this allowed us from on high, the salvation of the Christian people.

Indeed, after the union of the eastern church with the western church in the ecumenical council of Florence, and after the return of the Armenians, the Jacobites and the people of Mesopotamia, we despatched our venerable brother Andrew, archbishop of Kalocsa, to eastern lands and the island of Cyprus. He was to confirm in the faith which had been accepted the Greeks, Armenians and Jacobites living there, by his sermons and his expositions and explanations of the decrees issued for their union and return. He was also to try to bring back to the truth of the faith, using our warnings and exhortations, whoever else he might find there to be strangers to

the truth of faith in other sects, whether they are followers of Nestorius or of Macarius.

He pursued this task with vigour, thanks to the wisdom and other virtues with which the Lord, the giver of graces, has enriched him. He finally eliminated from their hearts, after many discussions, first all the impurity of Nestorius, who asserted that Christ is only a man and that the blessed Virgin is the mother of Christ but not of God, then that of the most impious Macarius of Antioch who, although he confessed that Christ is true God and man, asserted that there is in him only the divine will and principle of action, thereby diminishing his humanity.

With divine assistance he converted to the truth of the orthodox faith our venerable brothers Timothy, metropolitan of the Chaldeans, who have been called Nestorians in Cyprus until now because they used to follow Nestorius, and Elias, bishop of the Maronites, who with his nation in the same realm was infected with the teachings of Macarius, together with a whole multitude of peoples and clerics subject to him in the island of Cyprus. To these prelates and all their subjects there, he delivered the faith and doctrine that the holy church has always cherished and observed. The said prelates, moreover, accepted this faith and doctrine with much veneration in a great public assembly of different peoples living in that realm, which was held in the metropolitan church of St Sophia.

After that, the Chaldeans sent to us the aforesaid metropolitan Timothy, and Bishop Elias of the Maronites sent an envoy, to make to us a solemn profession of the faith of the Roman church, which by the providence of the Lord and the aid of blessed Peter and the apostle has always remained immaculate . Timothy, the metropolitan, reverently and devoutly professed this faith and doctrine to us, in this sacred general congregation of the ecumenical Lateran council, first in his own Chaldean tongue, which was interpreted in Greek and then translated from Greek into Latin, as follows: I, Timothy, archbishop of Tarsus and metropolitan of the Chaldeans who are in Cyprus, on behalf of myself and all my peoples in Cyprus, profess, vow and promise to almighty God, Father and Son and holy Spirit, and then to you, most holy and blessed father pope Eugenius IV, to this holy apostolic see and to this holy and venerable congregation, that henceforth I will always remain under the obedience of you and your successors and of the holy Roman church as under the unique mother and head of all other churches. Also, in future I will always hold and profess that the holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son, as the holy Roman church teaches and holds. Also, in future I will always hold and approve two natures, two wills, one hypostasis and two principles of action in Christ.

Also, in future I will always confess and approve all seven sacraments of the Roman church, just as she holds, teaches and preaches.

Also, in future I will never add oil in the sacred eucharist.

Also, in future I will always hold, confess, preach and teach whatever the holy Roman church holds, confesses, teaches and preaches and I reject, anathematize and condemn whatever she rejects, anathematizes and condemns; in future I will always reject, anathematize and condemn especially the impieties and blasphemies of the most wicked heresiarch Nestorius and every other heresy raising its head against this holy catholic and apostolic church.

This is the faith, holy father, that I vow and promise to hold and observe and to see that it is held and observed by all my subjects. I engage myself and solemnly promise to deprive of all his goods and benefices, to excommunicate and to denounce as heretical and condemned, whoever rejects it and raises himself up against it and, if he is obstinate, to degrade him and to hand him over to the secular arm.

Then our beloved son in Christ Isaac, envoy of our venerable brother Elias, bishop of the Maronites, on his behalf and in his name, rejecting the heresy of Macarius about one will in Christ, made with great veneration a profession that was similar in all details.

For the devotion of these professions and for the salvation of so many souls we offer immense thanks to God and our lord Jesus Christ, who is in our times so greatly enlarging the faith and bestowing benefits on so many Christian peoples. We receive and approve these professions; we receive into the bosom of holy mother church the metropolitan and the bishop in Cyprus and their subjects; and while they remain in the aforesaid faith, obedience and devotion, we honour them with the following favours and privileges.

First, nobody shall in future dare to call the said metropolitan of the Chaldeans and the said bishop of the Maronites, or their clerics and peoples or any individual among them, heretics, or to call Chaldeans, Nestorians. If anyone despises this ordinance, we order him to be excommunicated until such time as he offers a worthy satisfaction or has been punished, in the judgment of the ordinary, by some other temporal penalty.

Also, the said metropolitan and bishop and their successors are forthwith to be preferred in each and every honour to bishops who are separated from the communion of the holy Roman church.

Also, in future they can lay censures on their subjects, and those whom they rightly excommunicate in future shall be held by all as excommunicated, and those whom they absolve shall be held by all as absolved.

Also, the said prelates and priests and their clerics can freely celebrate divine services in the churches of Catholics, and Catholics can freely celebrate them in their churches.

Also, in future the said prelates and clerics and their lay men and women, who have accepted this union and faith, can choose to be buried in the churches of Catholics, to contract marriages with Catholics, but in the rite of Latin Catholics, and to enjoy and utilize all benefits, immunities and liberties which other Catholics, both lay and clerical, possess and enjoy in the said realm. Let nobody therefore . . . If anyone however . . .

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Session 1—14 December 1431

The holy synod of Basel, representing the universal church, legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit under the presidency of the most reverend father in Christ lord Julian, cardinal deacon of St Angelo of the holy Roman church, legate of the apostolic see, for the glory of almighty God, the exaltation of the catholic faith and the progress of the Christian religion, laying its foundation on the cornerstone Christ Jesus, in whom the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord, calls to mind that the holy general synod of Constance, celebrated in the holy Spirit, esteeming it salutary and beneficial that general councils should be frequent in the holy church of God, established this by its decree as follows: The frequent holding of general councils . . . 2 Hence for the execution of that decree, the city of Pavia in Italy was chosen for the general council to be held at the end of the five years immediately following. At the decreed time that council was indeed inaugurated in the said city of Pavia and thence it was translated for certain reasons to the city of Siena. In that general council which was begun in Pavia and was held in the city of Siena, this city of Basel was chosen and duly assigned for the next future general council to be held after the seven-year period from the end of the council of Siena, as is stated in the public instrument then composed about this succession.

[Establishment of the holy council of Basel]

The most reverend lord legate in his desire to fulfil the apostolic commission since at the time when the beginning of the council was imminent he was immersed in the expedition against the pestilential heresy of the Hussites for the sake of the faith, had his vicegerents despatched to this city and thereafter with all possible speed came himself to this city, in order that, with the help of God's grace, he might fulfil in this general council the office of legate laid upon him, as our most holy lord Eugenius IV, pope by divine providence, had by a series of letters of his holiness enjoined on him. In this city, during more than three months, he held several congregations with prelates and others who had arrived in the city for the said general council, and he had discussions about the establishment and holding of the council. Finally it was decreed that the present solemn session should be held, in which, firstly, since from the above it is manifest that this city is the place deputed for the general council and the date for it to be held is already past, and the authority of the most holy apostolic see is not lacking, it decrees, defines and declares that in this city and place the general council is canonically fixed and founded, and that all, both prelates and others who by right or custom are obliged to attend general councils, are bound to come to its celebration.

[Purpose of the council of Basel]

Seeing that all things direct their actions more immediately and intensely the more knowledge they have of their destined purpose, so this holy synod, after intense meditation and thought on the needs of the Christian religion and after mature and ordered deliberation, decrees that, with the help of God from whom all good things comet, it will pursue with all its zeal and attention these three ends. First that, with the banishment of the darkness of all heresies from the bounds of the Christian people, the light of catholic truth, by the generosity of Christ the true light, may be resplendent. Secondly that, after due thought and with the help of the author of peace, the Christian people, freed from the madness of wars by which — with the sower of weeds doing his work — it is affected and divided in various parts of the world, may be brought back to a peaceful and tranquil state. Thirdly, as the vine of Christ has already almost run wild on account of the multitude of thistles and thorns of vices crowding in upon it, to cut them back through the endeavour of necessary cultivation, with the work from on high of the evangelical husbandman, so that it may flourish again and produce with happy abundance the fruits of virtue and esteem. Since such great benefits as these cannot be hoped for without a generous flow of heavenly grace, it earnestly exhorts in the Lord all Christ's faithful that for the happy achievement of the aforesaid they should urge the divine majesty with devout prayers, fasts and almsgiving that the good and merciful God, placated by such humble submission, may deign with his accustomed goodness to grant to this sacred council the desired completion of all these things, imposing this on them unto the remission of their sins.

Session 2—15 February 1432

The holy general synod of Basel, representing the church militant, for an everlasting record. To the praise of almighty God and the glory and honour of the blessed and undivided Trinity, for the extirpation of heresies and errors, for the reformation of morals in head and members of the church of God, and for the pacification of kings and kingdoms and other Christians in discord among themselves through the instigation of the author of discords, the synod, legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit, decrees, establishes, defines, declares and ordains as follows.

[Decree that the council of Basel is legitimately begun]

First, that the same sacred synod of Basel, by the decrees and ordinances of the sacred general councils of Constance and of Siena, and by the action of apostolic authority, was and is duly and legitimately begun and assembled in this place of Basel. And lest anyone should doubt about the power of the same sacred synod of Basel, this same synod in this present session ordains and decrees that two declarations from the decrees of the synod of Constance are to be inserted among its other decrees already issued or to be issued. The text of the first of these declarations is as follows, First it declares . . . 1; that of the other is this, Next it declares . . . I Therefore, presupposing also some other decrees of the council of Constance, especially the one beginning The frequent, which were read out in a former session of this sacred synod of Basel, the said synod of Basel decrees and declares that, legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit, for the extirpation of heresies and a general reformation of morals in the church in head and members, and also for procuring peace among Christians, as is stated above, no one of whatever authority, even if he is distinguished by the dignity of the papacy, could or should have in the past, or can or ought to now or in the future, dissolve or transfer the said synod of Basel to another locality or prorogue it to another date without the deliberation and consent of the same synod of Basel.

Session 3—29 April 1432

[Impossibility of the dissolution of the council is decreed]

This holy council, considering that the aforesaid dissolution of the council was enacted contrary to the decrees of the council of Constance, and that it leads to a serious danger of subversion of the faith as well as disturbance and harm for the state of the church and scandal for the whole Christian people, decreed that the dissolution could not be made. Since, therefore, the dissolution is no obstacle at all, the prosecution of what has been praiseworthy set in motion for the stability of the faith and the salvation of the Christian people should, with the grace of the holy Spirit, be proceeded with. But since the aforesaid bishop of Lausanne and the dean

of Utrecht, on their return, did not bring back from the most holy lord pope the desired reply, although the said most holy lord pope had been entreated, appealed to, required, requested and with every insistence very often implored not only by the aforesaid messengers in the name of the council but also by the most serene lord Sigismund, king of the Romans and loyal supporter of the church, so this holy synod, relying on the decrees of the sacred council of Constance, whose words are these, That the holy synod . . . ' decreed in this solemn session to make its demands to the most holy lord pope and also to the most reverend lord cardinals in the way and style as follows.

This holy synod, therefore, legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit, beseeches the aforesaid most blessed lord pope Eugenius with all reverence and insistence and through the tender mercy of Jesus Christ entreats, requires implores and warns him to revoke in fact the alleged dissolution as in fact it was issued, and in the same way as he made the dissolution to send and publish over the different parts of the world the revocation, and completely to desist from every obstacle against the said council: indeed more, to favour and assist the council, as is his duty, and to offer it every support and opportune help, and to come in person within three months — an interval which it assigns and determines as a peremptory limit — if his physical state so allows. But if it does not, in his place and stead he should nominate some person or persons and send them with plenary power for each and every question in this council up to its very end through each and all of its acts gradually and successively. Otherwise, if his holiness should fail to do this, which is a thing that in no way is to be expected of the vicar of Christ, the holy synod will see to it that provision is made for the necessities of the church as shall seem just and as the holy Spirit shall dictate, and will proceed in accordance with what befits both divine and human law.

In the same way it beseeches, requires, implores and warns the aforesaid most reverend lord cardinals, who as the chief hinges of the church of God should apply their minds with great fervour to these things, that they should bring earnest pressure to bear on the lord pope about the aforesaid things, and should favour, aid and help this sacred council in every opportune way. And since their presence, in view of their authority, great prudence and practical experience, is highly expedient for this sacred council, it requires and warns and cites the lord cardinals and each of them in particular that, canonical impediment ceasing, they shall come to the said council within three months from the notification by this present decree, which interval it precisely and peremptorily assigns and determines for the triple canonical monition. Otherwise, since failure to come to the sacred general council so as to aid the church in its great necessities will without doubt be judged as contributing to the danger of a serious challenge to the catholic faith and to the harm of the whole church, this holy council at the expiry of the stated interval will take proceedings against those who have failed to come, since their contumacy demands this, according as the order of divine as well as human law shall dictate and allow, and will take steps, with the help of the most High, to provide for the necessities of the church. In the aforesaid however, the said synod has no intention of including the most reverend lord cardinal of holy Cross as long as he is engaged in negotiations for peace between the

kingdoms of France and England; but in respect of the most reverend lord cardinals of Plasencia and of Foix, as they are commonly called, and the cardinal of St Eustathius, since they are in nearer localities, it limits the above-mentioned interval to two months.

Further the holy synod orders all lord patriarchs, archbishops, bishops and other prelates of churches, and clerics, notaries and ecclesiastical personages, as also other faithful of Christ, of every status, dignity, grade and condition, and it requires and requests all princes and lords, even if they possess imperial, regal, ducal or any other authority, who shall have been requested regarding the above, that in virtue of holy obedience, under threat of the divine judgment and under pain of excommunication, they should report, intimate and notify all and each of the aforesaid things to the said most holy lord pope and to the most reverend lord cardinals, and should have them reported, intimated and notified to these people in person, if they have safe and convenient access to them. Where personal access is not possible, this is to be done by affixing notices drawn up by a public notary, if this can be done safely, to their residences and also on the door of the apostolic palace and on the churches of St John Lateran, St Peter's and St Mary Maggiore; or failing that, on the chief churches of the cities of Sutri Viterbo and Siena, or three other neighbouring cities, as it shall seem better. This holy synod decrees that these places are suitable for the execution of all the aforementioned.

Yet this holy synod, desiring to meeting future eventualities and to avoid all waste of time, since delay in these matters is fraught with danger, ordains and decrees that a decree of admonition and citation of this kind, after it has been read out in this solemn session and published, shall be affixed to the doors of the cathedral church of Basel so that, should it happen that its intimation cannot be effected in any of the ways outlined above, in that case, as by a public edict, for four months to be calculated from this day, the publication, monition and citation shall be considered as performed in respect of all its effects, so that all its effects are obtained and it binds those to whom it is directed as if it had been insinuated and presented in person, the above peremptory force and threats being considered here as inserted.

Further, this holy council declares and insists that, despite the aforesaid delays, since a legal summons has already been issued by the decrees of the council of Constance, and since the urgency of the situation suggests the following, as does also the nature of what is to be accomplished in the continuation of the council and of the things to be done in it, it means to proceed in an orderly, due and mature manner, and for that reason not to be remiss in any way in the process. Lastly, this holy synod decrees citations for all prelates and others who are obliged to come to a general council, and each and all generals of orders and also inquisitors of heresy, with the delay of a fixed term or terms as it shall seem good to the deputies, with penalties and censures and suitable conditions.

Session 4—20 June 1432

The holy general synod of Basel, legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit, representing the universal church. By this decree we indicate to all that to each and every priest, baron, noble, soldier and citizen and every other man of whatever status, condition or rank from the kingdom of Bohemia and the marquisate of Moravia, from Prague and the cities and other places of the same, and to all other ecclesiastical and secular persons who, male or female, will be sent with them to the general council of Basel and are about to set out, to all these persons under whatever name they are listed or can be called, within however the number of two hundred persons, by the force of this present decree we grant and give our fullest and perfect safe-conduct and we bestow a most genuine security for their coming to this city of Basel and their abiding, staying and resting here, and for their treating with us on affairs suitably committed to them and their arranging, concluding and ending them. We allow them to perform the divine offices in their lodgings without any obstacle on our part; so that also, on account of their presence, neither on their journey nor in any other place of their journey, in coming, remaining or returning, nor in the city itself of Basel, will cessation from divine offices be imposed in any way in the form of an interdict.

Further, they will be allowed freely to propose and explain in the general council or synod of Basel, by word of mouth or in writing, the four articles on whose clarity they insist; to prove, support and recommend them with quotations from the sacred scriptures and the blessed doctors and, if need be, to reply to the objections of the general synod or to argue about them with one or several from the council or to discuss them in a charitable way without any impediment; with reproach, abuse and taunt being totally excluded, observing the form and the ways specified and mutually agreed between our envoys and the messengers of the aforesaid kingdom and marquisate in the city of Eger; and specifically that in the case of the four articles proposed by them, the divine law, the apostolic practice of Christ and of the primitive church, and the councils and doctors truly founding themselves on the same, will be accepted in the council of Basel as the most true and impartial judge. Whether these discussions are or are not brought to a conclusion, whenever by the order or permission of their superiors they, or any one of them, shall choose to return home, then straightaway, without any refusal, condition or delay, they may return freely and safely at their pleasure, with their goods, honour and persons intact, but with the knowledge of the deputies of the council so that suitable provision may be made, without guile or fraud, for their safety.

Moreover, in this safe-conduct of theirs we wish all clauses to be included and contained, and to be held as included, which are necessary and opportune for full, efficacious and sufficient safety in coming, staying and returning; we express these things clearly in order to secure and keep the good of peace. If any one or several of them, whether coming on their journey to us in Basel or while staying here or on their return, shall commit (may it not be so) some heinous crime by which the benefit of security conceded to them could be annulled and quashed, we wish, admit

and concede that those arrested in a deed of such sort shall straightaway be punished only by their own people, not by others, by an adequate censure and a sufficient penalty to be approved and praised by us, with the form, conditions and ways of their security remaining completely unimpaired. Similarly if any of ours, whether on their way to us in Basel or while staying here or returning, shall commit (may it not be so) some heinous crime through which the benefit of the security conceded to them could be annulled or quashed, we wish that those arrested in a crime of this sort shall straightaway be punished only by us and our people, not by others, by an adequate censure and a sufficient penalty to be approved and praised by the lord ambassadors and envoys, with the present form, conditions and ways of the security remaining completely unimpaired.

We wish also that it be allowed to each and every ambassador as often as it is opportune or necessary, to leave the city of Basel in order to take the air and to return to it, and freely to send and despatch their messengers to any place for the arrangement of necessary affairs and to receive a messenger or messengers as often as it suits them, in such a way that they are accompanied by the deputies of the council who will provide for their safety. Further, neither in discussions, public sermons or other conferences can or may our side, in prejudice, derogation or depreciation of the case of the four articles, employ or procure in the locality of the city of Basel any terms that tend to disorder. These safe-conducts and assurances are to remain in force from the moment when, and for as long as, they are received into the care of our protection, to be brought to Basel, and in all the period of their staying here: and again on the conclusion of a sufficient hearing, an interval of twenty days having been set in advance, when they shall request it, or after the hearing the council shall decide, we shall, with God's help and without any guile or fraud, let them return from Basel to Tuschkau, Tachov or Engelsberg, to whichever of these places they prefer to go.

Also for all of Christ's faithful, especially for the most holy lord the Roman pontiff, the most serene prince the lord Sigismund, king of the Romans etc. , the venerable lord cardinals, archbishops and bishops and lord abbots, prelates and clerics as well as for the most illustrious princes, kings, dukes, marquises, counts, barons and noble soldiers, universities, and communities of cities, castles and towns, and their councillors, magistrates, officials and others of whatever condition and status, whether ecclesiastical or secular, under whatever name they go, and for the subjects of all the aforesaid and every part of them, we promise in good faith and guarantee that all of us and every one of the aforesaid persons will observe and guard the prescribed security and the form of their safe-conduct in all its conditions, points and clauses elaborated above, inviolably and unbroken in good faith and with pure heart. Further, we promise that we neither wish nor ought on any alleged occasion, covertly or overtly, to employ any authority, power, law, statute or privilege of laws or canons or of any councils whatever, especially of Constance and Siena, in whatever form of words they may be expressed, to any prejudice of the safe-conduct or assurance and the public hearing which we have granted to them. But if we or anyone of us, of whatever condition or status or pre-eminence, shall violate in any

detail or clause the form and way of the above assurance and safe-conduct (which, however, may the Almighty deign to avert), and a suitable penalty shall not have followed straightaway, to be fittingly approved and praised by their judgment, let them hold us, as indeed they can, to have incurred all penalties which by divine and human law or by custom violators of such safe-conducts incur, without any excuse or any challenge from this side .

[If the apostolic see becomes vacant while the council is in progress, the election may not be held outside the council]

The holy general synod of Basel, legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit, representing the universal church, bears in mind that it pertains to the duty of providence to foresee the future with clear-sighted consideration and to take wholesome steps against what could bring harm to the common good. The synod is intent upon the extirpation of heresies, peace among the people of Christ and the reformation of morals, with the grace of the holy Spirit, as is really necessary in view of the present situation. It has summoned the venerable fathers in Christ, the cardinals of the holy Roman church, to this sacred council, convinced that their presence at it is fruitful in many ways in view of their authority, wisdom and knowledge of affairs. If, then, as obedient sons they are coming to the council when the apostolic see falls vacant elsewhere, such a situation would redound to the benefit of the church but the obedient cardinals would be serving the council to their own disadvantage, whereas everyone knows that obedience should bring with it not disadvantage but an increase of benefit and honour. Lest disobedience may seem to be to the advantage of some who fail to come, this holy synod, with purposeful anticipation and for the above and other reasons which can and should motivate a prudent mind establishes, decrees and defines that, in the event of a vacancy of the apostolic see while this sacred council is in progress, the election of the supreme pontiff shall be held in the place of this sacred council, and it forbids it to be held elsewhere. The synod also decrees that any attempt against this by any authority whatsoever, be it even papal, notwithstanding any constitutions issued or to be issued or anything else acting to the contrary, even if there should be special mention in so many words or a confirmation on oath, which the synod rejects with full knowledge, is null and void and of no force or importance by law; and that those who attempt such things shall be disqualified in both active and passive voice with respect to the election of a Roman pontiff and for every other dignity, and deprived perpetually of all dignities which they hold, and shall automatically incur the mark of infamy as well as sentence of excommunication. If any such pretended election should be attempted, then both the one allegedly elected and his supporters as well as those who treat him as elected incur in the same way the above-mentioned penalties. The said synod reserves to itself, except at the moment of death, absolution of everyone who in any way shall incur the said sentences or any one of them. It declares that the present decree shall bind and come into force after forty days following its publication.

Session 5—9 August 1432

[In this session there were approved rules about the organization of the council: On cases and the procurator of the faith; Judges are deputed for the general examination of cases; That members of the council may not be brought to trial outside the place of this council; Officials are appointed.]

Session 6—6 September 1432

[This session was devoted to reading: Petition of the promoters of the council against the pope and the cardinals.]

Session 7—6 November 1432

[Interval for a papal election]

The most holy general synod of Basel, legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit, representing the universal church, for an everlasting record. Earlier this holy synod issued a decree about the election of a Roman pontiff if a vacancy of the apostolic see occurs during this sacred council. It is entitled, It pertains to the duty of providence . . . , and is to be found in full in the fourth session. However, a doubt about that decree has occurred to some, namely that the interval of ten days which the constitution of the council of Lyons fixed for the cardinals of the holy Roman church to enter the conclave, might elapse and be too restricted at least by the time that notification of the vacancy reaches this council. For, the interval would seem to be too rigid and too short for many of the cardinals who may be away in localities distant from this council. Moreover this holy synod wishes to eliminate all grounds for doubt and to provide carefully for what is conducive to the peace and unity of God's holy church, and with all modesty and due maturity to proceed with what is known in this matter, as in all things to promote the exaltation of the catholic faith and the general reformation and peace of the Christian people, for which the council is legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit. It therefore decrees that in the case of a vacancy of the apostolic see in the lifetime of this present council, nothing shall be done for the election of a Roman pontiff before the expiry of sixty days from the day of the vacancy.

Session 8—18 December 1432

[Decree that there ought to be only one council]

The most holy general synod of Basel, legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit, representing the universal church, for an everlasting record. Just as there is only one holy catholic church, as Christ her spouse says, My dove, my perfect one, is only one, and as an article of the faith declares, since unity does not tolerate division, so there can be only one general council representing the holy catholic church. Since, therefore, by decrees of the sacred general councils of Constance and of Siena and by the approval of two Roman pontiffs, namely Martin V and Eugenius IV of happy memory, a general council was instituted and established in this city of Basel and assembled legitimately in the holy Spirit, it is clear that during this council another general council cannot exist elsewhere. Whoever therefore, during the lifetime of this sacred council shall presume to raise and hold another assembly with the title of a general council, is convicted of raising and holding a conventicle of schismatics and not a council of the catholic church. Therefore this holy council warns and exhorts all Christ's faithful, of whatever status or rank they may be, even if papal, imperial or regal, under the adjuration of the divine judgment which holy scripture relates in the case of Korah, Dathan and Abiram, authors of schism, and it strictly commands and forbids them in virtue of holy obedience and under the penalties laid down by the law, not to hold or summon, during this sacred council, another assembly with the title of a general council, which in reality would not be a council, nor to go to or to take part in or in any way to have recourse to it as if it were a general council, even under the pretext of any promise or oath, nor to hold or esteem it to be or even to call it a general council, even if it claims to have been summoned or shall try in the future to be summoned. If any ecclesiastical person, even a cardinal of the holy Roman church, or anyone else of whatever status, rank or condition he may be, shall dare to go to or stay in Bologna or any place with a pretended general council, during this present council, he shall automatically incur sentence of excommunication and deprivation of all benefices, dignities and offices and disqualification from them; and the dignities, offices and benefices of such persons may be freely disposed of by those to whom this pertains by law.

Session 9—22 January 1433

[This session was entirely taken up with the solemn reception of the emperor Sigismund.]

Session 10—19 February 1433

[This session was almost entirely taken up with reading: Accusation of contumacy of the pope.]

Session 11—27 April 1433

[For the permanent validity of the authority of general councils]

The holy general council of Basel, legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit representing the universal church, for an everlasting record. Since the frequent holding of general councils, as a principal means of cultivating the Lord's field affects the universal church, every effort should be made that all obstacles that could impede so holy an institution are removed with great care. Hence this holy synod, obeying the decree of the council of Constance beginning The frequent, and anxious that no scandals such as unhappily have occurred in our day should spring up again in the future, to the detriment of the church, establishes and decrees that the Roman pontiff, who ought to be the first in working in the Lord's vineyard and in drawing others to work by his example, should take part in general councils in person or by a legate or legates a latere who is or are to be chosen in consultation with and with the consent — which is not to be just by word of mouth — of two-thirds of the cardinals. Also, all ecclesiastical persons who by law or custom ought to attend general councils are bound henceforward to come in person without further summons to general councils, both by force of the constitution The frequent and by the authority of this sacred council of Basel or of some other future council legitimately assembled, unless they are prevented by a legitimate impediment, in which case they are bound to send suitable persons with a sufficient mandate. If the Roman pontiff or other above-mentioned persons fail to do this, or in any way take means to impede change, prorogue or dissolve the council, and shall not have repented with real satisfaction within four months, thereafter the pope will be automatically suspended from the papal administration and the other persons from the administration of their dignities; the papal administration will devolve by law upon the sacred council. If they persist with hardened hearts under the aforesaid penalties for a further two months after the said four months, then the general council shall proceed against both the Roman pontiff and the above-mentioned persons up to and including the penalty of deprivation.

[That everybody is free to come to the council]

This holy synod decrees that, notwithstanding any prohibition, even from the Roman pontiff, there is freedom for absolutely all persons, of whatsoever status or condition they may be, even if they are cardinals of the Roman church, to go to general

councils; and that the Roman pontiff is bound to grant permission to those who wish to go to general councils, especially to the aforesaid cardinals, if they request it.

[The council explains the phrase about prorogation of the council, and annuls attempts to the contrary, including future attempts]

This holy synod also declares that those words "it may never be prorogued", contained in the said decree, are to be understood so prohibitively that it cannot be prorogued even by a pope, and that a council actually assembled cannot be dissolved or moved from place to place by a Roman pontiff without the express consent of the council itself, and it quashes, voids and annuls anything that may be attempted in the future against this or even in disparagement or obstruction of this general council or of the persons, prelates and supporters of it, by deprivation, translation and ecclesiastical censures or in any other way.

[That the council may not be dissolved or moved without the express consent of two-thirds of each deputation, etc.]

For certain reasonable causes it decrees that the present council of Basel cannot be dissolved or moved from place to place by anybody, even by the pope, unless there is obtained the express consent of two-thirds of each deputation, after a scrutiny of the votes of individual members, and then the approval of two-thirds of the general congregation, after a similar scrutiny of the votes of individual members, and finally a declaration is to be made in a public session. It prays through the tender mercy of Jesus Christ, and by the sprinkling of his precious blood it adjures all members of this sacred council, both present and future, that in no way they give their consent to a dissolution or allow a change of place, except for just and manifest reasons, before the reform in head and members has been completed, in so far as this can reasonably be achieved.

[That the place of the council should be chosen a month before the dissolution, and the phrase "in ten years" is clarified]

In accordance with the ordinance of the council of Constance, it wishes that the place of the future council should be chosen at least a month before the date of the dissolution. It also declares, as a precaution, that the phrase "in ten years" which is used in the said constitution should be understood in this way, namely that the ten years should be completely finished, and when it is fully completed the authorization to hold a general council begins. If it happens for any reason that those who are obliged to attend general councils do not come at the beginning, it declares that the said authorization to hold the council does not thereby cease, but that it should be held as soon as it conveniently can. But so that it cannot be deferred for a long time, this council decrees that for twenty days before the end of the said ten years, or of some other interval if perhaps this should reasonably be determined by the council, the Roman pontiff in person or through his legate or legates, and the archbishop in whose province or diocese the council is to be held and all the prelates

who are within four days' journey of the place of the forthcoming council, provided there is no canonical impediment, in person or, if that cannot be, through suitable men constituted as proxies for this purpose, are obliged to present themselves so as to negotiate about the disposition of the place and other preliminaries of the council. On the day appointed for the opening of the council, those present shall celebrate a solemn mass of the holy Spirit, and the council shall be considered constituted and begun from that day. However, on account of the many necessities that can occur for those coming to a council, this holy synod exhorts those who shall be present not to bring difficult questions to a conclusion until after a reasonable wait for those absent and a fitting interval of time, rather, with divine fear as a guide, let everything proceed with due gravity, as the great mass of business of the universal church demands and requires. In those cases in which, according to the decree of Constance, the pope may, with the consent of the cardinals of the holy Roman church, change the place of a future council, it determines that, should the pope fail to do this, the college of cardinals may supply for the defect, on condition however that two-thirds of the cardinals agree, keeping, nevertheless to the procedure contained in the said decree The frequent. The said cardinals shall swear by God and their consciences that they are making the change of place, if indeed they decide this, for the clear reasons that are mentioned in the decree The frequent.

[That the electors of a pope before entering the conclave shall swear that, if one of them is elected, he will observe the said decrees]

So that the aforesaid may be put into execution the more easily, the holy synod determines that the electors of a Roman pontiff are bound, before entering the conclave, to swear to God and to promise the church that, should one of them be chosen as pope, he will observe the above decrees, statutes and ordinances, and to the best of his ability will endeavour to fulfil them really and effectively adding that whoever in future years shall be chosen as Roman pontiff must swear, among the other things which he must profess according to the decree of the council of Constance beginning Since the Roman pontiff, effective observance of the present decree. Later, in his first public consistory, he is bound to make again the same profession and let him also profess that, if he violates what is contained in this decree or commits a notorious crime which scandalizes the church, he will subject himself to the judgment of a general council. Both he and the college of cardinals shall insert this profession in the letters which they customarily send throughout the world on the accession of a new pope.

[That this decree should be published in synods]

So that nobody may plead ignorance of this wholesome and necessary decree, the holy synod orders, in virtue of holy obedience, all metropolitan bishops to have this decree read and published in provincial and synodal councils, and superiors of religious to have it read and published in their general chapters. 2

Session 12—13 July 1433

[Decree on elections and confirmations of bishops and prelates]

Just as in building a house the architect's chief concern is to lay such a foundation that the edifice built on it will endure immovable, so in the general reformation of the church the principal preoccupation of this holy synod is that the pastors set over the church may be such that, like pillars and bases, they will firmly uphold the church by the strength of their doctrine and merits. The office enjoined on prelates manifestly shows how great care should be taken in their election, for they are appointed for the government of souls for which our lord Jesus Christ died and shed his precious blood. Therefore the sacred canons promulgated under the Spirit of God, providentially established that each church and college or convent should elect a prelate for itself. Adhering to these prescriptions this holy synod, assembled in the same Spirit, establishes and defines that a general reservation of all metropolitan, cathedral, collegiate and monastic churches and elective dignities ought not to be made or used by the Roman pontiff in the future, always with the exception of reservations contained in the body of law and those which may arise in territories mediately or immediately subject to the Roman church by reason of direct or beneficial dominion. Rather, provision should duly be made for the aforesaid metropolitan, cathedral, monastic and collegiate churches and elective dignities, when they are vacant, by canonical elections and confirmations in conformity with the dispositions of the common law, without thereby derogating from statutes, privileges and reasonable customs, all postulations in the disposition of the common law remaining intact. This holy synod also decrees that it will be in conformity with reason and beneficial for the common good that the Roman pontiff should attempt nothing contrary to this salutary decree, except for an important, reasonable and manifest cause, which is to be specified expressly in an apostolic letter. So that this salutary decree may be more strictly adhered to, the same holy synod wishes that, among other things that the Roman pontiff shall profess on assuming office, he shall swear to observe inviolably this decree.

Since prelates should be such as is described above, those with the right of electing them should be very careful that they make a worthy election in the presence of God and of the people, and let them be most solicitous to elect such persons as can fill so great an office. Let them remember that if they act in so important an affair either fraudulently or carelessly or without regard for the fear of God, they will be the authors and cause of evil pastors and will therefore share in the penalties which the evil pastors themselves will suffer in the severe judgment of God. Since the endeavour of human fragility can effect nothing without the help of almighty God, from whom every good endowment and every perfect gift comes down, those in whose hands lies the election of a pontiff or an abbot shall meet in church on the day of the election in order to hear with great devotion a mass of the holy Spirit, whom they will humbly petition to deign to inspire them to elect a worthy pastor. The more devoutly they approach the act of election, the more readily they will merit that

grace, so let them confess and reverently receive the sacrament of the eucharist. When they have entered the place of the election of any prelate who is to be chosen through election, they shall swear in the hands of the president of the chapter, and the president in the hands of his immediate subordinate, in these words: I, N. , swear and promise to almighty God and to such and such a saint (according to the dedication of the church) to elect the person who I believe will be the more useful to the church in spiritual and temporal things, and not to give a vote to anyone who I think is procuring the election for himself by the promise or gift of some temporal thing, or by making a request in person or through another, or in any other way directly or indirectly. He who appoints a procurator to elect a certain person shall take the same oath and shall confess and communicate; so also shall a procurator with a general mandate for election in matters in which by common law he can be appointed a procurator in the business of such an election. The oath shall be taken also by those who may have made an agreement about the election of a future prelate, and they too are obliged to confess and to communicate. If they do not do so, for that occasion they shall be deprived by law of the power of electing. Thereupon let them elect to the said prelacy a man of lawful age, of serious character and adequate education, already in sacred orders and suitable in other respects in accordance with canonical regulations.

If the election is made in another way and of a different kind of person than the above or by the wickedness of simony, the election shall be invalid and null by law. Those electing simoniacally shall be automatically subject to perpetual deprivation of the right of electing, besides other penalties. Others shall be subject to canonical penalties. Those elected simoniacally and those who take part in such a simoniacal election, as well as the electors and those confirmed shall automatically incur the penalty of excommunication in horror of so great a crime. Moreover, those so elected and confirmed cannot be absolved from such guilt and excommunication unless they freely resign the churches and dignities which they had disgracefully obtained, and they are rendered perpetually disqualified from acquiring them again. In order to remove every root of ambition this holy synod implores through the tender mercy of Jesus Christ and most earnestly exhorts kings and princes, communities and others of whatever rank or dignity, ecclesiastical or secular, not to write letters to electors or to provide petitions for someone who will get such petitions or letters for himself or for another, and much less to resort to threats or pressure or anything else whereby the process of election would be rendered less free. Similarly, in virtue of holy obedience, it is enjoined on electors not to elect anyone on the strength of such letters, petitions, threats or pressure.

When the election has been completed and presented to the person who has the right of confirmation, if a co-elected person or an objector to the election shows himself, he should be summoned by name to discuss the matter of the disputed election. Usually a public announcement should be made in the church in which the election was held, in accordance with the constitution of Boniface VIII of happy memory. Whether or not a co-elected person or an objector appears, the confirmer should proceed in virtue of his office, as is done in the business of the inquisition, using

diligence in the due examination and discussion of the form of the election, of the merits of the one elected and of all the circumstances. The confirmation or the annulment of the election should be done in a judicial manner. So that the whole process may be clean and without blemish or even a suspicion of it, the confirmer should altogether refrain, personally as well as through others, from presuming to demand anything at all or even to receive free offerings in return for the confirmation or under the pretext of homage, subvention, gratitude or any other excuse of supposed custom or privilege. For notaries and scribes in such cases, let a moderate fee be levied which is proportionate to the work of writing and not to the value of the prelacy. If the said confirmers shall confirm elections in contravention of the above regulations or in respect of unsuitable persons or involving simony, such confirmations are automatically null. This is to be the case for the occasion, for those who confirm persons other than as stated above: but for the stain of simony, if they have incurred it, they automatically incur sentence of excommunication, from which they cannot be absolved except by the Roman pontiff, except at the point of death.

This holy synod exhorts the supreme pontiff, since he should be the mirror and standard of all sanctity and purity, not to demand or accept anything at all for confirming elections referred to him. Otherwise, if he scandalizes the church by notorious and repeated contraventions, he will be delated to a future council. However, for the burdens which he must carry for the government of the universal church, and for the sustenance of the cardinals of the holy Roman church and of other necessary officials, this holy council will make due and suitable provision before its dissolution. If it does not make any provision in this way, then those churches and benefices which hitherto paid a certain tax on the entry into office of a new prelate, shall be obliged thenceforward to pay in parts half of this tax for the year after their peaceful possession; this provision shall continue until the sustenance of the said pope and cardinals is otherwise provided for. By these ordinances the same synod does not intend any prejudice to the holy Roman and universal church or to any other church.

Session 13—11 September 1433

[In this session there was read out, Accusation of contumacy of the pope made by the promoters of the sacred council; the time-limit already intimated to Eugenius IV for him to come to Basel and to abrogate his decree dissolving the council was deferred; finally a new Decree for the protection of members was approved.]

Session 14—7 November 1433

[In this session there was made, Another deferral, for ninety days, of the monition to the pope, to which were added two proposals, one regarding the revoking of the suspension of the council. the other regarding Eugenius IV's assent to the council.]

Session 15—26 November 1433

[On provincial and synodal councils]

The holy general council of Basel, legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit, representing the universal church, for an everlasting record. Already this holy synod has promulgated a most salutary decree on the stability and authority of general councils, the frequent holding of which is a principal means of cultivating the Lord's field. Indeed, since there is no doubt that episcopal synods and provincial councils form part of this same cultivation, inasmuch as the ancient canons decreed that they should be frequent, so this holy synod, desiring that ancient and praiseworthy customs should be observed in our age, establishes and commands that an episcopal synod should be held yearly in every diocese after the octave of Easter, or on another day according to diocesan custom, at least once a year where custom does not prescribe two, by the diocesan in person unless he is prevented by a canonical impediment, in which case by a vicar who is fitted for the task. This synod should last at least two or three days, or as the bishops deem to be necessary.

On the first day, when the diocesan and all those who are obliged to be present at the synod have assembled, during or after the celebration of mass, the diocesan or another in his name shall expound the word of God, exhorting all to strive after good behaviour and refrain from vice, and to strive after what pertains to ecclesiastical discipline and each one's duties, and especially that those who have the care of souls should instruct the people subject to them in doctrine and with salutary exhortations on Sundays and feast-days. Then there should be read out the provincial and synodal statutes and, among other things, a comprehensive treatise on how the sacraments should be administered and other useful points for the instruction of priests. Then the diocesan himself should diligently inquire into the life and morals of his subjects and check with suitable correction the evil of simony, usurious contracts, concubinage, fornication and all other faults and excesses. He should revoke alienations of ecclesiastical property forbidden by law, and he should correct and reform abuses of clerics and other subjects who have failed in respect of the divine office and the wearing of proper dress. Since many scandals often arise because Pope Boniface VIII's constitution *Periculoso* on the enclosure of nuns is not observed, the diocesan should insist that this enclosure be strictly observed in accordance with that constitution; also that all religious subject to the diocesan should inviolably observe the rules and constitutions of their orders, especially that all ownership is renounced by them. Also let nothing be demanded simoniacally at their reception into a religious order. A chief care of the bishop at the synod should be to make inquiry and to apply proper remedies lest any teaching that is heretical,

erroneous, scandalous or offensive to pious ears, or fortune-telling, divinations incantations, superstitions or any diabolic inventions, infiltrate into his diocese. Let there be appointed synodal witnesses, who should be serious, prudent and honest men, filled with zeal for God's law, in a number proportionate to the area of the diocese, or others with their powers if none are appointed for this, who may be removed by the diocesan if they seem to him to be unsuitable and he may appoint others (as he thinks fit). They shall be obliged to take an oath in the hands of the diocesan himself or of his vicar, as is stated in the canon *Episcopus in synodo*; they shall travel round the diocese for a year and shall refer what they have seen to be in need of correction and reform to those whose duty it is to correct and reform. If these matters are not corrected and reformed, they shall refer them to a subsequent synod, when proper remedies should be applied. Besides what the diocesan hears from the synodal witnesses or others exercising their office, he should himself inquire assiduously about the faults of his subjects and so confront the guilty with the discipline of needed correction that it may serve as an example to others inclined to do evil.

Also, in every province within two years of the end of a general council, and thereafter at least once in every three years, a provincial council should be held in a safe place. It should be attended by both the archbishop and all his suffragans and others who are obliged to take part in such provincial councils, after a due summons has been issued to them. If a bishop is prevented by a canonical impediment, he should designate his procurator, not only to excuse and justify his absence, but also to participate in the council in his name and to report back what the council decides. Otherwise the bishop is automatically suspended from receiving half the fruits of his church for one year: these should be effectively diverted to the fabric of his church by someone deputed in the council itself. Others who fail to attend are to be punished at the decision of the council and other penalties of the law are to remain in force. Provincial councils are not to be held while a general council is sitting and for six months beforehand. At the beginning of a provincial council the metropolitan or someone in his name during the celebration of mass or afterwards, shall deliver an exhortation calling to mind the things that pertain to the ecclesiastical state and especially the episcopal office and warning all the participants that, as the prophet says, if any soul is lost by their fault his blood will be required by the Lord at their hands. In particular, there should be a strict warning that orders and benefices should be conferred, without any simony, on worthy and deserving persons whose lives are sufficiently well known. Above all, the greatest care and mature inquiry should be used when entrusting the care of souls. Ecclesiastical property on no account should be used for illegal purposes, but for the glory of God and the conservation of churches and, following the holy canons, with a primary concern for the poor and needy, mindful that at the tribunal of the eternal judge they will have to give an account of all of it to the very last farthing. In these councils there should be, according to the regulations of the law, a careful investigation into the correction of faults, the reform of the morals of subjects and especially the conduct of bishops in conferring benefices, confirming elections, administering orders, deputing confessors, preaching to the people, punishing the faults of their subjects and

observing episcopal synods, and in any other points respecting the episcopal office and the jurisdiction and administration of bishops in spiritual and temporal matters, especially whether they keep their hands clean of the stain of simony, in order that all those who are found to have transgressed in the aforesaid matters may be corrected and punished by the council. A similar careful inquiry should be instituted about the metropolitan himself in all these respects, and the council should explain clearly to him his faults and defects, admonishing and imploring him that since he is called and ought to be the father of others, he should altogether desist from such failings. Even so, the council should send straightaway to the Roman pontiff, or to another of his superiors if he has one, a written account of the investigation made about him, so that he may receive punishment and fitting reform from the Roman pontiff or other superior. Besides, if there are discords, quarrels and feuds among some which could disturb the peace and tranquillity of the province, the holy council should strive to pacify them and seek watchfully, as would a dutiful father, for peace and agreement among its sons. If discords of this sort arise between kingdoms, provinces and principalities, the holy bishops of God should straightaway arrange the simultaneous convocation of provincial councils and, in combining their respective counsel and help, strive to banish whatever promotes discord; they should not cease from this out of love or hatred for anyone, but raising the eyes of their minds to God alone and the salvation of their people and putting aside all half-heartedness, they should be intent on the sacred work of peace.

Moreover, in a provincial synod that immediately precedes a forthcoming general council, thought should be given to all that is likely to be dealt with in that general council, to the glory of God and the good of the province and the salvation of the Christian people. Let a suitable number of people be elected at it to go in the name of the whole province to the next general council; let them be provided for by a grant or in some other way, according to the law and the judgment of the provincial council; in such a way, however, that those wishing to go to the council or their clergy, in addition to those deputed as above, shall in no way be disadvantaged thereby. Also, let there be read out in each provincial council those things which the canonical regulations order to be read out in them, so that they may be observed inviolably and transgressors may be duly punished. If metropolitans and diocesans fail to celebrate provincial and episcopal synods at the aforesaid time, after the cessation of any legal impediment, they shall lose half of all fruits and revenues accruing to them by reason of their churches, and these shall be applied immediately to the fabric of their churches. If they persist in such neglect for three consecutive months, they shall automatically be suspended from their offices and benefices. After these intervals of time have elapsed, with the aforesaid penalties, the senior bishop in the province of the metropolitan, or the person in orders who is highest in dignity below a bishop, unless by custom or privilege it pertains to another, is obliged to supply for this failure to hold the said provincial and episcopal synods. Moreover, this holy synod bids all superiors of religious communities and orders of all kinds, who are responsible for holding chapters, to hold them at the appointed times, under the aforesaid penalties, and to see that they are held; and let them aim in them, in accordance with canonical sanctions and the constitutions of the orders,

at a true reform of the individual communities and orders, so that thereafter regular observance may duly flourish in all monasteries in accordance with their rules and constitutions, and in particular that the three fundamental vows of profession may be strictly observed. By the aforesaid, however, the holy synod does not mean to derogate in any way from anyone's rights.

Session 16—5 February 1434

[This session declares the adherence of Pope Eugenius to the council, with the usual ceremonies; Eugenius's bull *Dudum sacrum*, and three other bulls abrogated by that bull, are incorporated into the acts.]

Session 17—26 April 1434

[On the admission of the presidents into the council in the name of the lord pope Eugenius IV]

The holy general synod of Basel, legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit, representing the universal church, admits the beloved sons of the church Nicholas, priest of the title of holy Cross in Jerusalem, and Julian, deacon of St Angelo, cardinals of the holy Roman church, the venerable John, archbishop of Taranto, and Peter, bishop of Padua, and the beloved son of the church Louis, abbot of St Justina of Padua, as presidents in this sacred council in the name, stead and place of the most holy lord pope Eugenius IV, to have the fullest authority and effect throughout, but only on the following conditions: they are to be without any coercive jurisdiction, and the way of proceeding hitherto observed in this council is to remain unchanged, especially what is contained in the ordinances of this sacred council beginning, First, there shall be four deputations, as there are, among which all from the council shall be distributed equally as far as is possible, etc. It also ordains that apart from on a Friday, which is the ordinary day for a general congregation, another general congregation cannot be called unless at least three of the deputations agree to this beforehand. And then the presidents should be informed, or one of them, so that they may announce the programme. If they do not, one of the promoters of the council or someone from the deputations shall announce the programme. All from the council shall come to the congregation. On the other occasions, if the three deputations do not agree, nobody shall come to that congregation; and whatever is done there shall be null and void. The same with regard to a session. When what has been agreed upon by the deputations has been read out in the general congregation, the first of the presidents there present, even if another or others of them are absent, shall conclude the matter in accordance with the ordinances of the sacred council. If he or another of the presidents then presiding refuses to do this, the next prelate in the order of seating shall conclude the matter. If he is unwilling, let another in

succession do it. If it happens that none of the presidents comes to a congregation or a session of the general council, then the first prelate, as indicated above, shall fulfil the office of president for that day. Also, all the acts of this sacred council shall be made and despatched under the name and seal of this council, as has been done until now.

Session 18—26 June 1434

[On the renewal of the decree of the council of Constance about the authority and power of general councils]

The holy general synod of Basel, legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit, representing the universal church, for an everlasting record. It is well known that it redounds to the great benefit of the catholic church that its authority, which was earlier declared in the sacred council of Constance and to which all are obliged to submit, should be manifested frequently and the attention of all should be drawn to it. Just as councils of the past were accustomed to renew the salutary institutions and declarations of previous synods, so this holy synod too renews that necessary declaration on the authority of general councils, which was promulgated in the said council of Constance in the words that follow: First it declares . . . and Next it declares ,

Session 19—7 September 1434

[On the agreement between the council and the Greeks about union]

The holy general synod of Basel, legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit representing the universal church, for an everlasting record. As a dutiful mother is ever anxious about the health of her children and is uneasy until any dissension among them has been quietened, so and to a much greater extent holy mother church, which regenerates its children to eternal life, is wont to strive with every effort that all who go by the name of Christian may put aside all quarrelling and may guard in fraternal charity the unity of the faith, without which there can be no salvation. It has therefore been a primary care of this holy synod from the beginning of its meeting to put an end to the recent discord of the Bohemians and the ancient discord of the Greeks, and to bind them to us in the same permanent bond of faith and charity. We invited in all charity to this sacred council, through our letters and envoys, first the Bohemians, since they are nearer, and then the Greeks, so that the holy union might be achieved. Although many from the beginning thought that the Bohemian affair was not only difficult but almost impossible and judged our labours to be a waste of time and useless, nevertheless our lord Jesus Christ, to whom nothing is impossible, has so safely directed the business until now that the

invitation to the Bohemians has been of much greater benefit to holy church than the many powerful armies which frequently invaded their country.

This fills us with greater hope to pursue the union with the Greeks with all confidence and perseverance. We approach this task the more willingly because we perceive the Greeks to be very inclined to this union. For as soon as the most serene emperor of the Greeks and the patriarch of Constantinople were approached by our envoys, straightaway they appointed to this holy synod three outstanding men from those who seem to be of great authority among them — the first of whom was indeed a blood-relative of the emperor — with a sufficient commission from the emperor himself signed by his own hand and with a golden seal, and furnished with letters of the patriarch. Both in a general congregation and in the presence of our commissaries they expressed the most fervent desire of the emperor, the patriarch and the whole eastern church for this union. They urge and daily stimulate us in a wonderful way to pursue this holy work, strongly and persistently affirming two things: that union is only possible in a universal synod in which both the western church and the eastern church meet, and that union will assuredly follow if matters proceed in that synod in the way that is agreed below. We were filled with joy and gladness when we heard this. For what happier and more glorious thing could ever happen to the catholic church than that so many eastern peoples, who seem to be about equal in number to those of our faith, should be joined with us in the unity of faith? What could be more useful and fruitful to the Christian people, since the beginning of the church, than for an inveterate and destructive schism to be completely eradicated? Moreover, we trust that with God's help another benefit will accrue to the Christian commonwealth; because from this union, once it is established, there is hope that very many from the abominable sect of Mahomet will be converted to the catholic faith. What, then, should not be attempted and done by Christ's faithful for so holy and salutary an objective? What Catholic is not in duty bound to risk not only the passing substance of this world but even his body and soul for such an advance of the Christian name and the orthodox faith? Wherefore, we venerable cardinals of the holy Roman church, presidents of the apostolic see, casting all our thought on God, who alone does great wonders, deputed the patriarch of Antioch and a suitable number of archbishops, bishops, abbots, masters and doctors to treat of this question with the ambassadors of the Greeks and to look for a way to reach a solution. After these men had frequently met and discussed among themselves and with the envoys, they reached the conclusions given below. These conclusions, in accordance with the custom of this council, were seriously debated by the deputations and ratified by a general congregation. Their contents, together with the chrysobull of the lord emperor, are as follows.

[Agreement of the deputies of the sacred council with the ambassadors of the Greeks]

The ambassadors of the most serene lord emperor of the Greeks and of the lord patriarch of Constantinople, namely the lord Demetrius protonostiarus Palaeologus Metotides, the venerable Isidore abbot of the monastery of St Demetrius, and the

lord John Dissipatus of the household of the same emperor, meeting together with the lord deputies of the sacred council, first declared that if the western church would agree that this synod should be held in Constantinople, the eastern church would meet there at its own expense and there would be no need for the western church to pay any expenses to eastern prelates. Indeed, the lord emperor himself would, within his limits, provide for Latin prelates on their way to Constantinople. But if it was preferred that the prelates of the eastern church should come to Latin territories for the said synod, then for legitimate reasons the western church would have to meet the expenses of the eastern church. Since the said lord deputies for many reasons believed that this union would be more conveniently arranged in the city of Basel, where in fact the council was sitting, they frequently and urgently pressed the lord envoys that this place should be chosen for the holy union and offered to pay the necessary expenses for this. The envoys replied that since the instructions given to them by the emperor and the patriarch contained limitations on certain places, they would not choose the city of Basel because it was not mentioned in the instructions. The deputies of the sacred council, aware of the holy and perfect intention of the council not to spare any labour and expenditure for the honour of God and the advance of the catholic faith, judged it inexpedient to miss so great a good merely on a question of place. So they agreed, subject to the council's consent, to one of the places named below with the condition, which is detailed later, that one or more persons should be sent to the lord emperor, the patriarch and others to persuade them by cogent reasons to agree to the city of Basel. The nominated places are these: Calabria, Ancona or another maritime territory; Bologna, Milan or another Italian city; and outside Italy, Buda in Hungary, Vienna in Austria or in the last place, Savoy.

The lord deputies agreed with the lord ambassadors in what follows, subject to the council's consent. First, the ambassadors promised that the emperor of the Greeks, the patriarch of Constantinople, the other three patriarchs and the archbishops, bishops and other ecclesiastics who can conveniently come, will come to the synod. Likewise, representatives will come from all the kingdoms and territories subject to the churches of the Greeks, with full power and authority which shall be confirmed by oath and suitable documents by both the secular authorities and the prelates. Also, the sacred council shall send one or more ambassadors with eight thousand ducats for the holding of a congregation of the prelates of the eastern church in Constantinople. The eight thousand ducats will be paid out by the ambassadors of the sacred council, as it shall seem good to the lord emperor or to the ambassadors themselves; but in such a way that, if the said prelates refuse to come to Constantinople or, having come to Constantinople, refuse to go to the synod, then the emperor shall be bound to restore to the said ambassadors whatever they may have expended on this matter.

Also, that the western church shall pay the expenses of four large galleys, of which two shall be from Constantinople and two from elsewhere, to convey to our port at the appropriate time the emperor, the patriarchs and the prelates of the eastern church with their suites, to the number of seven hundred persons, and to return them

to Constantinople. The western church shall pay the expenses for this in the following way. For the expenses of the emperor and of seven hundred persons from Constantinople to our last port, it will give the emperor fifteen thousand ducats. From the said last port to the place of the said council, and thereafter as long as they remain at the synod and until their return to Constantinople, it will give to the emperor with the said seven hundred persons fair expenses. Also that within the ten months after next November, the sacred council shall be obliged to send two large galleys and two lighter ones to Constantinople with three hundred crossbowmen. On these galleys shall travel the ambassadors of the sacred council and the lord Demetrius protonostarius Palaeologus, chief of the lord emperor's ambassadors. These ambassadors of the sacred council will have with them fifteen thousand ducats to be given to the lord emperor for the expenses that he and the patriarchs, prelates and others who are coming, to the number of seven hundred persons, shall incur between Constantinople and the last port at which they shall put in, as mentioned above. Also, the said ambassadors of the sacred council who are to travel on the galleys will arrange that ten thousand ducats are at hand to be expended, if necessary, on the defence of the city of Constantinople against any danger that the Turks might cause the city during the lord emperor's absence; this money will be expended by someone deputed by the said ambassadors of the sacred council in proportion to the necessity. Also, the said ambassadors of the sacred council will pay the cost of two light galleys and three hundred crossbowmen for the defence of the city of Constantinople in the lord emperor's absence, and shall ensure that the crews of the said galleys and the crossbowmen take an oath in the hands of the emperor that they will serve him faithfully. Their captains shall be appointed by the emperor. Also, that the said ambassadors shall have for the expenses of the two large galleys what is usually expended in arming such galleys.

Also, the ambassadors of the sacred council who are to go with the said galleys to Constantinople, shall name to the lord emperor the port at which they should finally land and the place, from among those listed above, where the said universal synod shall be held. They will, however, strive with all their might that the city of Basel be chosen, as is to be hoped. Also, this sacred council of Basel will remain meanwhile at Basel, and shall not be dissolved as long as there is no legitimate impediment; but if a legitimate impediment arises, which may God avert, it may transfer itself for its continuation to another city, in accordance with the decree The frequent . If the lord emperor is not satisfied with this place, then within one month after he has landed at the said last port, the sacred council will transfer itself to one of the said places nominated by the same council, as was said above.

Also that, in any event, all the above shall be fulfilled by both parties; and all the above shall be effected in a really stable way and with the greatest force and security that is possible for the sacred council, namely by a decree and under a seal. Also, when all the aforesaid matters have been concluded and agreed and, as was said, fully confirmed, the supreme pontiff should give his express consent by his patent bulls. Everything above is to be understood in good faith, without fraud or deceit and without legitimate or manifest impediment. If all the clauses are fulfilled, the

said ambassadors of the Greeks shall state and promise that assuredly the above persons will come even if there should be war and threats to their city, and in confirmation of all this they will deliver to the sacred council a chrysebull of the said emperor, and on behalf of the said emperor they and the others shall take an oath, in writing and signed, in pledge of their firm and true belief that the universal holy synod ought to take place with God's help, unless there intervenes the death of the emperor or some obvious and real obstacle that cannot be escaped or avoided.

Lastly, the ambassadors of the Greeks were requested to explain the meaning of some terms contained in their instructions. First, what they understand by "universal synod". They replied that the pope and the patriarchs ought to be present at the synod either in person or through their procurators; similarly other prelates ought to be present either in person or through representatives; and they promised, as is stated above, that the lord emperor of the Greeks and the patriarch of Constantinople will participate in person. "Free and inviolate", that is each may freely declare his judgment without any obstacle or violence. "Without contention", that is without quarrelsome and ill-tempered contention; but debates and discussions which are necessary, peaceful, honest and charitable are not excluded. "Apostolic and canonical", to explain how these words and the way of proceeding in the synod are to be understood, they refer themselves to what the universal synod itself shall declare and arrange. Also that the emperor of the Greeks and their church shall have due honour, that is to say, what it had when the present schism began, always saving the rights, honours, privileges and dignities of the supreme pontiff and the Roman church and the emperor of the Romans. If any doubt arises, let it be referred to the decision of the said universal council. There follows the text of the chrysebull of the said emperor translated from Greek into Latin, Whereas there were sent . . . 1; and the letter of the lord patriarch of Constantinople with a leaden seal translated from Greek into Latin, which is as follows, Joseph by the grace of God archbishop of Constantinople . . . we receive the letter of your reverence . . . 2

By the authority of the universal church, therefore, this holy synod by this present decree approves, ratifies, confirms, determines and decrees the above clauses and agreements, and it promises to observe each and all of them and to keep them intact, as is said above. As they lead to an increase of the orthodox faith and the benefit of the catholic church and the whole Christian people, they should be most welcome and acceptable to all who love the faith of Christ. Since, as has been said above, the Greeks for a variety of reasons request that the most holy lord pope Eugenius IV should expressly consent to these clauses and agreements, lest on this account so great a good should be let slip, this holy synod implores and begs Eugenius in all charity, and through the tender mercy of Jesus Christ it requests and demands with all possible insistence, that he expresses his assent, for the benefit of the faith and of ecclesiastical unity, to the aforesaid clauses and agreements, which have already been approved and ratified by a synodal decree, by his bulls in the customary style of the Roman curia.

[Decree on Jews and neophytes]

The holy general synod of Basel, legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit, representing the universal church, for an everlasting record. This holy synod following in the footsteps of our saviour Jesus Christ, desires in deepest charity that all may acknowledge the truth of the gospel and thereafter abide in it faithfully. By these salutary instructions it desires to provide measures whereby Jews and other infidels may be converted to the orthodox faith and converts may remain steadfastly in it. It therefore decrees that all diocesan bishops should depute persons well trained in scripture, several times a year, in the places where Jews and other infidels live, to preach and expound the truth of the catholic faith in such a way that the infidels who hear it can recognise their errors. They should compel infidels of both sexes who have reached the age of discretion, to attend these sermons under pain both of being excluded from business dealings with the faithful and of other apposite penalties. But the bishops and the preachers should behave towards them with such charity as to gain them for Christ not only by the manifestation of the truth but also by other kindnesses. The synod decrees that Christians of whatever rank or status who in any way impede the attendance of Jews at these sermons, or who forbid it, automatically incur the stigma of being supporters of unbelief.

Since this preaching will be more fruitful in proportion to the linguistic skill of the preachers, we decree that there must be faithful observance of the constitution of the council of Vienne, which ordered the provision in certain universities of teachers of the Hebrew, Arabic, Greek and Chaldean languages. So that this may be more adhered to, we wish that the rectors of these universities should add to what they swear to on taking office, that they will endeavour to observe the said constitution. It should be clearly laid down, at the councils of the provinces in which these universities are situated, that the teachers of the said languages are to be adequately recompensed.

Furthermore, renewing the sacred canons, we command both diocesan bishops and secular powers to prohibit in every way Jews and other infidels from having Christians, male or female, in their households and service, or as nurses of their children; and Christians from joining with them in festivities, marriages, banquets or baths, or in much conversation, and from taking them as doctors or agents of marriages or officially appointed mediators of other contracts. They should not be given other public offices, or admitted to any academic degrees, or allowed to have on lease lands or other ecclesiastical rents. They are to be forbidden to buy ecclesiastical books, chalices, crosses and other ornaments of churches under pain of the loss of the object, or to accept them in pledge under pain of the loss of the money that they lent. They are to be compelled, under severe penalties, to wear some garment whereby they can be clearly distinguished from Christians. In order to prevent too much intercourse, they should be made to dwell in areas, in the cities and towns, which are apart from the dwellings of Christians and as far distant as

possible from churches. On Sundays and other solemn festivals they should not dare to have their shops open or to work in public.

[About those who desire conversion to the faith]

If any of them wishes to be converted to the catholic faith, all his goods, both movable and immovable, shall remain intact and unharmed in his possession. But if his goods were acquired by usury or illicit dealings, and the persons to whom restitution ought to be made are known, it is absolutely necessary that this restitution be made, since the sin is not forgiven unless the illegal object is restored. However, if these persons are no longer an issue because the church has turned the goods to pious uses, this holy synod, acting for the universal church, grants in favour of the baptism received that the goods should remain with the church as a pious use, and it forbids both ecclesiastics and secular persons, under pain of divine anathema, to cause or allow to be caused any vexation on this count under any pretext whatsoever, but they should regard it as a great gain to have won such persons for Christ. Moreover since, as it is written, if anyone has this world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him ?, this holy synod through the tender mercy of God exhorts all, both ecclesiastics and secular persons, to stretch out helping hands to such converts if they are poor or in need at the time of their conversion. Bishops should exhort Christians to aid these converts and should themselves support them from the income of churches, as far as they can, and from what passes through their hands for the benefit of the poor, and they should defend them with fatherly solicitude from detraction and invective.

Since by the grace of baptism converts have been made fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, and since regeneration in the spirit is of far greater worth than birth in the flesh, we determine by this edict that they should enjoy these privileges, liberties and immunities, of the cities and localities in which they are regenerated by holy baptism, which others obtain merely by reason of birth and origin. Let the priests who baptise them and those who receive them from the sacred font carefully instruct them, both before and after their baptism, in the articles of the faith and the precepts of the new law and the ceremonies of the catholic church. Both they and the bishops should strive that, at least for a long time, they do not mingle much with Jews or infidels lest, as occurs with convalescents from illness, a small occasion may make them fall back into their former perdition. Since experience shows that social communication between converts renders them weaker in our faith, and has been found to damage much their salvation, this holy synod exhorts local ordinaries to exercise care and zeal that they are married to born-Christians, in so far as this seems to promote an increase of the faith. Converts should be forbidden, under pain of severe penalties, to bury the dead according to the Jewish custom or to observe in any way the sabbath and other solemnities and rites of their old sect. Rather, they should frequent our churches and sermons, like other Catholics, and conform themselves in everything to Christian customs. Those who show contempt for the above should be delated to the diocesan bishops or inquisitors of heresy by their parish priests, or by others who are entrusted by law or

ancient custom with inquiring into such matters, or by anyone else at all. Let them be so punished, with the aid of the secular arm if need be, as to give an example to others.

There should be careful inquiry into all these things in provincial councils and synods, and an opportune remedy should be applied not only to negligent bishops and priests but also to converts and infidels who scorn the above. If anyone, of whatever rank or status, shall encourage or defend such converts against being compelled to observe the Christian rite or anything else mentioned above, he shall incur the penalties promulgated against abettors of heretics. If converts fail to correct themselves after a canonical warning, and as Judaizers are found to have returned to their vomit, let proceedings be taken against them as against perfidious heretics in conformity with the enactments of the sacred canons. If there have been granted to Jews or infidels, or perhaps shall be granted to them in the future, any indults or privileges by any ecclesiastics or secular persons, of whatever status or dignity, even papal or imperial, which tend in any way to the detriment of the catholic faith, the Christian name or anything mentioned above, this holy synod decrees them quashed and annulled; the apostolic and synodal decrees and constitutions enacted about the above remaining in force. In order that the memory of this holy constitution may be perpetually retained and that nobody may be able to claim ignorance of it, the holy synod orders that it should be promulgated at least once a year during divine service in all cathedral and college churches and other holy places where the faithful gather in large numbers.

Session 20—22 January 1435

[Decree on concubinaries]

The holy general synod of Basel, legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit representing the universal church, for an everlasting record. We are inclined to grant requests for authentic statutes and decrees in proportion to the likelihood that they will be observed. For this reason we ordered to be extracted from our acts and recorded in this present document, at the request of the beloved sons of the church N. and N. , who assert that they need texts of this kind for judicial and extra-judicial purposes, the texts of the constitutions transcribed below, which we issued some time ago and promulgated in the cathedral church of Basel on 22 January 1435 and incorporated into our acts. They are as follows.

Any cleric of whatsoever status, condition, religious order or dignity, even if it be episcopal or some other pre-eminence, who, after receiving notice of this constitution, as he may be presumed to have done, for two months after its publication in cathedral churches, which bishops are bound to arrange, after the constitution has come to his notice, still persists as a public concubinary, shall automatically be suspended for three months from the fruits of all his benefices.

These fruits shall be consigned by his superior to the fabric or some other evident need of the churches from which the fruits come. His superior is bound to admonish him, as soon as he is aware that he is a public concubinary, to dismiss his concubine within a very short time. If he does not dismiss her, or having dismissed her takes her again or another woman, this holy synod orders his superior to deprive him of all his benefices. These public concubinaries moreover, shall be disqualified from receiving any goods, dignities, benefices or offices until such time as, after dismissing their concubines and an evident emendation of their lives, they shall have received a dispensation from their superiors. Those who receive a dispensation and then return to public concubinage, as to their vomit, shall be totally debarred from the above without any hope of another dispensation. If those who are responsible for correcting such people fail to punish them, as stated above, their superiors shall punish properly both them for their neglect and the others for their concubinage. Severe measures must be taken also in provincial and synodal councils against both those who neglect to punish and those who are reputed offenders, even by suspension from the conferment of benefices or some other adequate penalty. Those who are found by provincial councils or their superiors to deserve deprivation for public concubinage, but who can be deprived only by the supreme pontiff, should be referred immediately to the supreme pontiff together with the process of inquiry. The same diligence and inquiry should be employed by general and provincial chapters in respect of their subjects: and other penalties established against them and other non-public concubinaries are to remain in force. By "public" is meant not only someone whose concubinage is made notorious by a judicial sentence or a legal confession or by a notoriety that no subterfuge can conceal, but also anyone who keeps a woman suspected of incontinence and of ill repute and who, after being admonished by his superior, does not dismiss her.

Because in some regions there are persons with ecclesiastical jurisdiction who are not ashamed to accept bribes from concubinaries for allowing them to wallow in their filth, this holy synod commands, under pain of eternal malediction, that henceforth they shall not tolerate or dissemble such conduct in any way by agreement, composition or promise; otherwise, in addition to the aforesaid penalty for negligence, they shall be strictly obliged and compelled to give to pious causes double what they have received in this way. Prelates should take every care to segregate from their subjects concubines and women of doubtful repute, even by recourse to the secular arm if need be, and they should not allow children born of such concubinage to live with their fathers. This holy synod also orders that this constitution is to be published in the aforesaid synods and chapters, and that stern warning should be given to subjects to dismiss their concubines. It also enjoins on all secular men, even if they are of royal rank, not to interpose any obstacle whatever under any excuse to prelates who proceed, in virtue of their office, against their subjects for concubinage. Moreover, since fornication of every kind is forbidden by divine law and is to be avoided under pain of mortal sin, this holy synod warns all lay people, both married and single, to abstain from concubinage. That man is most blameworthy who has a wife but goes to another woman. If a single man cannot abstain, let him marry, as the apostle advises. Let those

responsible strive with all their strength, by salutary advice and canonical sanctions, for the observance of this divine precept.

[Excommunicates are not to be shunned unless specifically named]

To avoid scandals and many dangers and to relieve timorous consciences, this holy synod decrees that henceforth nobody shall be obliged to abstain from communion with anyone in the administration and reception of sacraments or in any other sacred or profane matters, or to shun someone or to observe an ecclesiastical interdict, on the ground of any ecclesiastical sentence, censure, suspension or prohibition that has been promulgated in general by a person or by the law, unless the sentence, prohibition, suspension or censure was specifically or expressly promulgated or pronounced by a judge against a specified person, college, university, church or place, or if it is clear that someone has incurred a sentence of excommunication with such notoriety that it cannot be concealed or in any way excused in law. For the synod wishes such persons to be avoided in accordance with canonical sanctions. By this, however, it does not intend any relief or favour to those so excommunicated, suspended, interdicted or prohibited.

[Interdicts are not to be imposed lightly]

Since an indiscriminating promulgation of interdicts has led to many scandals, this holy synod determines that no city, town, castle, vill or place may be laid under an ecclesiastical interdict except by reason or through the fault of the places themselves or of their lord, governors or officials. Such places cannot be laid under an interdict by any ordinary or delegated authority by reason or through the fault of any other private person, unless the person has been previously excommunicated and denounced, or publicly named in a church, and the lords or governors or officials of the places, though requested by the authority of a judge, have not effectively evicted the excommunicated person within two days or made him give satisfaction. If he is evicted after two days, or retires or gives satisfaction, divine services may be resumed straightaway. This applies also to dependencies of the place.

So that lawsuits may be brought to a speedier end, a second appeal is hereby forbidden if it is a question of the same complaint or if the appeal is made from the same interlocutory sentence which does not have the force of a final judgment. Anyone who makes a frivolous or unjust appeal before the final judgment shall be condemned by the appeal judge to pay to the party appealed against the sum of fifteen gold florins of the treasury, in addition to the expenses, damages and interest.

Session 21—9 June 1435

[On annates]

The holy general synod of Basel, legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit, representing the universal church, for an everlasting record. In the name of the holy Spirit the paraclete, this holy synod decrees that in future, both in the Roman curia and elsewhere, for the confirmation of elections, admission of postulations and provision of presentations and for collations, dispositions, elections, postulations, presentations, even if made by layfolk, institutions, installations and investitures, in respect of cathedral and metropolitan churches, monasteries, dignities, benefices and any ecclesiastical offices whatsoever, and for sacred orders, blessings and pallia, nothing whatsoever is to be exacted, either before or after, for sealing the bull of the letters, or for common annates, minor services, first fruits or dues, or under any other title or name, or on the pretext of any custom, privilege or statute, or for any other reason or occasion, directly or indirectly. Only the writers abbreviators and registrars of the letters or minutes shall receive a suitable salary for their work. If anyone dares to contravene this sacred canon by demanding, giving or promising anything, he shall incur the penalty inflicted on simoniacs and shall acquire no right or title to the dignities or benefices thus obtained. Obligations, promises, censures and mandates, and whatever is done to the prejudice of this most salutary decree, are to be deemed null and void. Even if, which God forbid, the Roman pontiff, who beyond all others should carry out and observe the canons of universal councils, should scandalize the church by acting contrary to this sanction, he should be delated to a general council. Others are to be punished by their own superiors with a fitting penalty, proportionate to their offence, in accordance with canonical sanctions.

[About those in peaceful possession]

Whoever has been in possession for the last three years, not through violence but with a specious title, peacefully and without a lawsuit, of a prelacy, dignity, benefice or office, or shall have possession of them in the future, cannot be disturbed afterwards in his claim or possession by anyone, even by reason of a newly enacted law, except in the case of warfare or some other legitimate impediment, which he must protest and intimate in accordance with the council of Vienne. A lawsuit in this case is to be understood as regards future controversies, if the proceedings have reached the execution of the citation, the exhibition of his right in the judgment and the observance of all the terms. Ordinaries, however, should make careful inquiry to see that nobody possesses a benefice without a title. If they find such a person, they shall declare that the right does not belong to him, and they shall give the right either to him, if they think fit, unless he is an intruded person or violent or undeserving in some other way, or to some other suitable person.

[How the divine office is to be celebrated in church]

A person who is about to make a request to a secular prince takes pains to compose himself and his words by decent dress, becoming gesture, regulated speech and close attention of mind. How much more careful ought he to be in all these things when he is about to pray to almighty God in a sacred place! The holy synod therefore decrees

that in all cathedral and collegiate churches, at suitable times and at the sound of a bell, the divine praises shall be reverently celebrated by everyone through all the hours, not hurriedly but gravely and slowly and with reasonable pauses, especially in the middle of each verse of the psalms, and with a suitable distinction between solemn and ferial offices. Those who recite the canonical hours shall enter the church wearing an ankle-length gown and a clean surplice reaching below the middle of the shin-bone or a cloak, according to the different seasons and regions, and covering their heads not with a cowl but with an amice or a biretta. Having arrived in the choir, they shall behave with such gravity as the place and the duty demand, not gossiping or talking among themselves or with others, nor reading letters or other writings. They have gathered there to sing, so they should not keep their mouths shut rather all of them, especially those with more important functions, should sing to God eagerly in psalms, hymns and canticles. When "Glory be to the Father and, to the Son and to the holy Spirit" is being recited, all shall rise.

Whenever mention is made of the glorious name of Jesus, at which every knee should bow in heaven, on earth and under the earth, they shall bow their heads. Nobody should read or say the office there privately during the public chanting of the hours in common, for not only does this take away due honour from the choir but also it distracts the singers. To ensure that these things and whatever else concerns the performance of the divine office and the discipline of the choir are duly observed, the dean, or the person whose duty it is, shall carefully keep watch, looking round, to see if there is anything not in order. Transgressors shall be punished with the penalty of that hour in which the offence was committed, or even more severely, as the gravity of the fault demands.

[The times at which each one should be in choir]

Whoever is not present at matins before the end of the psalm Come let us exult at the other hours before the end of the first psalm, and at mass before the last Lord have mercy, until the end, except in cases of necessity and then only with the permission of the president of the choir, is to be considered absent from that hour, saving however any stricter regulations of churches in this regard. The same is to be observed with regard to those who do not remain in processions from the start until the finish. To ensure observance of this, someone, who shall be under oath to act honestly and to spare none, should be deputed with the duty of noting individuals who are absent at the appointed times. This holy synod also orders that in churches in which stipends are not allotted for individual hours, a deduction should be made from the gross revenues of delinquents so that their emoluments are more or less proportionate to their labours, thus destroying the abuses whereby anybody present at only one hour gets a full day's stipend and presidents or deans or other officials, from the mere fact of being officials, receive the daily stipends even when absent for purposes other than those of their church.

[How the canonical hours should be recited outside choir]

This holy synod admonishes all holders of benefices, or those in holy orders, since they are bound to the canonical hours, if they wish their prayers to be acceptable to God, to recite the day and night offices, not in a mumble or between their teeth, nor swallowing or abbreviating their words, nor intermingling conversation and laughter, but, whether they are alone or with others, reverently and distinctly and in such a place as will not diminish devotion, for which they ought to dispose and prepare themselves, as the scripture says: Before prayer prepare your soul, and do not be like someone who tempts God.

[About those who wander about the church during services]

Any holder of a benefice in a church, especially of a major one, if he is seen wandering around inside or outside the church during the divine services, strolling or chatting with others, shall automatically forfeit his attendance not only for that hour but also for the whole day. If after being corrected once he does not stop, let him be deprived of his stipends for a month, or, if he is obstinate, let him be subjected to a heavier penalty so that in the end he is forced to desist. Also, noisy comings and goings in the church should not be allowed to impede or disturb the divine service. Regulars who err in these matters in conventual churches should be punished with a heavy penalty at the judgment of their superior.

[About a notice-board hanging in the choir]

So that everything may be well ordered in the house of God and that each person may know what he has to do, let there be affixed a notice-board permanently hanging in the choir, with information on it of the duties of each canon or other benefice-holder as regards reading or singing at the individual hours during the week or a longer time. Anyone who fails to do in person or by proxy what is prescribed there, shall forfeit for each hour the stipend of one day.

[On those who at mass do not complete the creed, or sing songs, or say mass in too low a voice or without a server]

There are abuses in some churches whereby the "I believe in one God", which is the symbol and profession of our faith, is not sung to the end, or the preface or the Lord's prayer is omitted, or secular songs are sung in the church, or masses (including private ones) are said without a server, or the secret prayers are said in so low a voice that they cannot be heard by the people nearby. These abuses are to stop and we decree that any transgressors shall be duly punished by their superiors.

[About those who pledge divine worship]

We abolish also that abuse, so manifestly incompatible with divine worship, whereby some canons of churches, having contracted debts, bind themselves to their creditors in such a way that, if they do not pay their debts by a fixed time there will be a cessation of divine services. We declare this obligation null even if it has been

confirmed by oath. We decree that those who make these illicit agreements shall automatically lose for three months their revenues, which shall be applied to their church. They shall receive no emoluments from their church until they resume the divine services.

[On holding chapters at the same time as the principal mass]

This holy synod forbids chapters and other meetings of canons to be held, or chapter business to be transacted, at the same time as the principal mass, especially on solemn feasts, unless an urgent and manifest necessity suddenly occurs. Whoever summons the chapter for that time shall be suspended from receiving his daily stipends for a week, and the canons shall forego their stipends for that hour.

[On not performing spectacles in churches]

In some churches, during certain celebrations of the year, there are carried on various scandalous practices. Some people with mitre, crozier and pontifical vestments give blessings after the manner of bishops. Others are robed like kings and dukes; in some regions this is called the feast of fools or innocents, or of children. Some put on masked and theatrical comedies, others organize dances for men and women, attracting people to amusement and buffoonery. Others prepare meals and banquets there. This holy synod detests these abuses. It forbids ordinaries as well as deans and rectors of churches, under pain of being deprived of all ecclesiastical revenues for three months, to allow these and similar frivolities, or even markets and fairs, in churches, which ought to be houses of prayer, or even in cemeteries. They are to punish transgressors by ecclesiastical censures and other remedies of the law. The holy synod decrees that all customs, statutes and privileges which do not accord with these decrees, unless they add greater penalties, are null.

Session 22—15 October 1435

[On the condemnation of the book of friar Augustine of Rome, archbishop of Nazareth]

The holy general synod of Basel, legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit, representing the universal church, for an everlasting record. The main reason, among other pious aims, why this holy synod assembled was to preserve the truth of the catholic faith and to eradicate errors and heresies. Therefore the chief goal of our activity is, as soon as we learn of the spread of something that can harm the purity of the Christian faith or in any way obscures the brilliance of the light in the minds of the faithful, to eradicate it completely and carefully to clear the Lord's field of noxious weeds and brambles. This holy synod therefore condemns and censures a certain book by master Augustine, commonly called "of Rome", archbishop of Nazareth. Its first treatise is entitled, "On the sacrament of the unity of Jesus Christ

and the church, or on the whole Christ"; the second, "On Christ the head and his glorious sovereignty", another, "On the charity of Christ towards the elect and his infinite love". The holy synod condemns and censures the book as containing teaching that is unsound and erroneous in the faith, as well as its defenders.

The holy synod especially condemns and censures, in the book, the assertion which is scandalous, erroneous in the faith and offensive to the ears of the pious faithful, namely: Christ sins daily and has sinned daily from his very beginning, even though he avers that he does not understand this as of Christ our saviour, head of the church, but as referring to his members, which together with Christ the head form the one Christ, as he asserts. Also, the propositions, and ones similar to them, which the synod declares are contained in the articles condemned at the sacred council of Constance, namely the following. Not all the justified faithful are members of Christ, but only the elect, who finally will reign with Christ for ever. The members of Christ, from whom the church is constituted, are taken according to the ineffable foreknowledge of God; and the church is constituted only from those who are called according to his purpose of election. To be a member of Christ, it is not enough to be united with him in the bond of charity, some other union is needed. Also the following. The human nature in Christ is really Christ. The human nature in Christ is the person of Christ. The intimate cause that determines the human nature in Christ is not really distinguished from the nature that is determined. The human nature in Christ is without doubt the person of the Word; and the Word in Christ, once the nature has been assumed, is really the person who assumes. The human nature assumed by the Word in a personal union is truly God, natural and proper. Christ according to his created will loves the human nature united to the person of the Word as much as he loves the divine nature. Just as two persons in God are equally lovable, so the two natures in Christ, the human and the divine, are equally lovable on account of the common person. The soul of Christ sees God as clearly and intensely as God sees himself.

These propositions and others springing from the same root, which are to be found in the said book, this holy synod condemns and censures as erroneous in the faith. Lest it come to pass that any of the faithful fall into error on account of such teaching, the synod strictly forbids anyone to teach, preach, defend or approve the teaching of the said book, especially the aforesaid condemned and censured propositions, and its supporting treatises. It decrees that transgressors shall be punished as heretics and with other canonical penalties. By these measures the synod intends to detract in nothing from the sayings and writings of the holy doctors who discourse on these matters. On the contrary, it accepts and embraces them according to their true understanding as commonly expounded and declared by these doctors and other catholic teachers in the theological schools. Nor does the synod intend by this judgment to prejudice the person of the said author since, though duly summoned, he gave reasons for being absent, and in some of his writings and elsewhere he has submitted his teaching to the church's judgment. Further, this holy synod orders all archbishops, bishops, chancellors of universities and inquisitors of heresy, who are responsible in this matter, to ensure that nobody has the said book

and supporting treatises or presumes to keep them with him, rather he shall consign them to these authorities, so that they may deal with them in accordance with the law: otherwise let such persons be proceeded against with canonical censures.

Session 23—26 March 1436

[On the election of the supreme pontiff]

The holy general synod of Basel, legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit, representing the universal church, for an everlasting record. Since a good shepherd is the salvation of his flock, it is the duty of this sacred synod to strive, with all the diligence that human law can contrive, that the Roman pontiff, who is first in the Lord's flock and the supreme shepherd, should be and continue to be such as to provide for the salvation of all souls and the benefit of the whole Christian world and to fulfil worthily so great an office. Therefore it renews the constitutions about the election of Roman pontiffs which sacred councils and supreme pontiffs have issued and it adds to them some further salutary norms. It decrees that whenever the apostolic see falls vacant, all the cardinals of the holy Roman church who are present in the place where the election of the supreme pontiff is to be held, shall meet together on the tenth day after the see becomes vacant in some chapel or place near the conclave. From there they shall process behind a cross, two by two, devoutly singing the *Veni creator Spiritus*, and enter the place of the conclave, each taking with him not more than two necessary attendants. In view of the ceremonies, two clerics may also be admitted, at least one of whom shall be a notary. The chamberlain together with the deputies for the custody of the conclave shall ensure that nobody, apart from the aforesaid persons, enters the conclave. After the cardinals have entered and the doors have been closed, the chamberlain shall enter with the deputies and carefully examine the cells of all the cardinals. He shall remove any food and edibles found there, except medicines of the sick and infirm. He shall ensure a careful guard whenever he leaves and closes the door, and each day he shall closely inspect the food being brought in for the cardinals and allow only what seems necessary for moderate refreshment, without prejudice to the decrees passed in the fourth and seventh sessions of this sacred council.

On the next day all the cardinals, in the presence of all those in the conclave, shall hear a mass of the holy Spirit and receive the eucharist. Before the voting begins, they shall swear before the holy gospels in these words: I, N. . . , cardinal of . . . , swear and promise to almighty God, Father, Son and holy Spirit, and to blessed Peter, prince of the apostles, that I shall elect as pontiff the person who I think will be beneficial to the universal church in both spiritual and temporal matters and suitable for so great a dignity; I shall not give my vote to anyone who I have reason to think is directly or indirectly aiming at getting himself elected, by his promising or giving some temporal thing or by asking in person or through another or in any other way whatsoever; and I shall not make obeisance to anyone elected as pontiff before he

takes the oath prescribed by this council of Basel; so help me God, to whom on the day of tremendous judgment I shall have to give an account of this oath and all my deeds After this each cardinal shall submit a ballot-card, on which he shall nominate a maximum of three persons. If he nominates more than one person, the second and third persons shall be from outside the college of cardinals. There shall not be more than one ballot on any day and it shall be held immediately after the mass. When the ballot-cards have been read, they shall be burnt straightaway unless two-thirds of the votes are for the same person. No approach shall be made to anyone until six ballots have been completed. During this time let the cardinals reflect and seriously ponder how much merit or loss to themselves, how much fruit or damage to the Christian people, how much good or evil, they will be causing by their choice of a pontiff. There is nothing, indeed, by which they can more merit the grace or the wrath of our lord Jesus Christ than when they are setting his vicar over his sheep, which he loved so much as to suffer the torments of the cross and to die for them.

[On the profession of the supreme pontiff]

The holy synod decrees that the person elected as pope is obliged to express his consent to the election in the manner stated below. It is fitting that this consent should be made to the cardinals, if the person elected is present in the curia, or to one of the cardinals or someone mandated by them if he is not present there, in the presence of a notary and at least ten persons. After he has been informed of the election, he is bound to act within a day of the demand. If he does not do so, his election is annulled and the cardinals must proceed in the Lord's name to another election. But if he expresses his consent, as stated above, the cardinals shall straightaway make due obeisance to him as supreme pontiff. Once the obeisance has been made by the cardinals, nobody has any right to challenge his pontificate.

[Form of consent]

In the name of the holy and undivided Trinity, Father, Son and holy Spirit. I, N. , elected pope, with both heart and mouth confess and profess to almighty God, whose church I undertake with his assistance to govern, and to blessed Peter, prince of the apostles, that as long as I am in this fragile life I will firmly believe and hold the catholic faith, according to the tradition of the apostles, of general councils and of other holy fathers, especially of the eight holy universal councils — namely the first at Nicaea, the second at Constantinople, the third which was the first at Ephesus, the fourth at Chalcedon, the fifth and sixth at Constantinople, the seventh at Nicaea and the eighth at Constantinople — as well as of the general councils at the Lateran, Lyons, Vienne, Constance and Basel, and to preserve intact this faith unchanged to the last dot, and to defend and preach it to the point of death and the shedding of my blood, and likewise to follow and observe in every way the rite handed down of the ecclesiastical sacraments of the church. I promise also to labour faithfully for the defence of the catholic faith, the extirpation of heresies and errors, the reform of morals and the peace of the Christian people. I swear also to continue with the holding of general councils and the confirmation of elections in accordance

with the decrees of the holy council of Basel. I have signed this profession with my own hand; I offer it on the altar with a sincere mind to you almighty God, to whom on the day of tremendous judgment I shall have to give an account of this and all my deeds; and I will repeat it at the first public consistory.

'So that this salutary institution may not fade from the supreme pontiff's memory with the passage of time, every year on the anniversary of his election or of his coronation, the first cardinal present shall, during mass, publicly and in a loud voice address the supreme pontiff thus: Most holy father, may your holiness heed and carefully ponder the promise which you made to God on the day of your election. He shall then read out the promise and shall continue as follows: May your holiness, therefore, for the honour of God, for the salvation of your soul and for the good of the universal church, strive to observe to your utmost all these things in good faith and without guile or fraud. Recall whose place it is that you hold on earth, namely of him who laid down his life for his sheep, who thrice asked the blessed Peter if he loved him, before he entrusted his sheep to him', and who, as the just judge whom nothing secret escapes, will exact from you an account of everything to the very last farthing. Remember what blessed Peter and his successors as pontiffs did: they thought only of the honour of God, the spread of the faith, the public good of the church and the salvation and benefit of the faithful; finally, imitating their master and Lord they did not hesitate to lay down their lives for the sheep entrusted to them. Do not lay up for yourself or your kinsfolk treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves and robbers break in, but lay up for yourself treasure in heaven. Do not be an acceptor of persons or of blood-ties or of homeland or of nation. All people are children of God and have been equally entrusted to your care and safe-keeping. Say after the example of Christ: Whoever does the will of my Father in heaven, he is my brother and sister and mother. In distributing dignities and benefices put before yourself neither the flesh nor gifts nor anything temporal at all, but solely God and the virtues and merits of people. Exercise ecclesiastical discipline in correcting faults, mindful of what grace Phinehas merited and what punishment Eli, the one for avenging injuries to God, the other for pretending not to know them. Defend, help and support the poor and needy. Show a fatherly charity to all.

After the solemnities of his coronation, and each year after the anniversary of his election, the supreme pontiff shall carefully discuss with his brethren, for at least eight consecutive days, how he shall carry out his solemn promises to God. In the first place, therefore, he should examine where in the world the Christian religion is being persecuted by Turks, Saracens, Tartars and other infidels; where heresy or schism or any form of superstition flourishes, in which provinces there has been a decline in morals and observance of the divine precepts and in the right way of living, in both ecclesiastical and secular matters, where ecclesiastical liberty is infringed; among which kings, princes and peoples enmity, wars and fears of war are rife; and like a dutiful father he should strive with his brethren carefully to provide remedies.

When these affairs of an universal character have been settled, let him deal with those nearer at hand. Let him begin by reforming and ordering in an exemplary way his house, his household and the Roman curia, where and in so far as this is necessary, so that from the visible reform of the church which is the head of all others, lesser churches may draw purity of morals and no occasion may be given for calumny and malicious talk. Making diligent inquiry in person and through others about both important and lesser persons, he should allow no delay or pretence in correcting whatever is found in need of reform, remembering that the sin is twofold, the one being committed, the other and far more serious being its consequences. For whatever is done there is easily made into an example. That is why, if the head is sick, disease enters into the rest of the body. The papal household and court should be a kind of clear mirror, so that all who look at it form themselves and live according to its example. Thereafter let him banish and eradicate any traces of simony, filthy concubinage or whatever may offend God or scandalize people. He should take care that officials do not exercise their offices badly or oppress anybody or extort anything by threats or illegal means, and that those in charge of the officials do not let their excesses go unpunished. They should not tolerate clothes and colours which are forbidden by the sacred canons. Let him instruct the Roman clergy, who are chiefly and immediately subject to him, in all ecclesiastical decorum, admonishing them that God's approval depends not on the parade and splendour of clothes but on humility, docility, purity of mind, simplicity of heart, holiness of behaviour and the other virtues which commend their possessor to God and to people. Let him enact reforms especially so that the divine services may be observed in the churches of Rome with all seemly devotion and discipline. He should also instruct the people of Rome, which is his own parish, and direct them in the way of salvation. He should bid the cardinals to visit and reform their titular churches and parishes as befits their office. He should appoint some prelate of great learning and of proven and exemplary life as his vicar in the city, to take his place in the episcopal care of the clergy and people, and he should often inquire about whether he is fulfilling his task.

Next, let him reflect carefully with the same brethren on the good and wholesome administration of the temporalities of the Roman church and let him ensure that the provinces, cities, towns, castles and lands subject to the Roman church are justly and peacefully ruled with such moderation that the difference between government by ecclesiastics and by secular princes is like that between a father and a master. He should not aim at gain, but cherishing all with paternal charity he should esteem them not as subjects but as sons and daughters. Since he has charge of their spiritual and temporal well-being, he must watch to get rid of all factions and seditious groups — especially of Guelphs and Ghibellines and other similar parties — which breed destruction to both souls and bodies. He must strive, employing spiritual and temporal penalties of all possible kinds, to remove all causes of dissension and to keep people united for the defence of the church. To govern the provinces and chief cities, he should appoint cardinals or prelates of untarnished reputation who will seek not financial gain but justice and peace for their subjects. Their legation shall last for two, or at most three, years. When their legation has ended, since it is right

that each one should give an account of his stewardship, one or more outstanding men shall be appointed to review their administration and to hear the complaints and petitions of the inhabitants and to render justice; these shall refer what they cannot easily effect to the pope, and he shall strive to find out what the former have done and to punish any illegal actions, so that their successors may learn from their example to avoid illegalities. Officials should be allotted a suitable salary on which they can live honestly, to prevent them turning their hand to what is illicit.

The supreme pontiff should often inquire how his legates, governors and commissars, as well as deputies and feudatories of the Roman church, rule their subjects and whether they oppress them with new taxes and exactions. He should not tolerate any austere measure or unjust burden being laid on his subjects' necks. For it would be wicked to allow those whom the pope should rule as a father to be treated tyrannically by others. He should ensure that statutes and ancient constitutions by which provinces and districts have been well governed in the past are kept intact. But if any have subsequently been issued unreasonably or from envy or partiality, they should be cancelled or altered when the reasons for doing so have been understood. Within a year from the day of his election, the Roman pontiff shall summon spokesmen and proctors of the provinces and chief cities of the Roman church and shall question them closely, with fatherly affection, about the following: the state and condition of their territories, how they were governed in the time of his predecessor, whether they are being oppressed by any unjust burden, and what should be done for their good government. Then let him apply to them as to sons remedies which will provide for their benefit and security and for the common good. He should not shrink from repeating this at least every two years. Among the other things that feudatories, captains, governors, senators, castellans and other high officials of Rome and of the lands of the church customarily swear to, there should be added at the time of their installation an oath that, when the papacy is vacant, they will hold their cities, lands, places, citadels, castles and peoples at the command of the cardinals, in the name of the Roman church, and that they will freely and without opposition hand them over to the same. Lest the supreme pontiff may seem to be influenced by carnal affection rather than by right reason, and to avoid the scandals that sad experience shows often arise, in future he shall not make or allow to be made anyone related to him by blood or affinity to the third degree inclusive a duke, marquis, count, feudatory, emphyteutic tenant, deputy, governor, official or castellan of any province, city, town, castle, fortress or place of the Roman church, nor give them any jurisdiction or power over them, nor appoint them captains or leaders of men under arms. The cardinals must never agree with a supreme pontiff attempting to act otherwise, and his successor as pontiff shall withdraw and revoke anything done in this way.

In accordance with the constitution of Pope Nicholas IV, the holy synod decrees that half of all fruits, revenues, proceeds, fines, penalties and taxes deriving from all the lands and places subject to the Roman church belongs to the cardinals of the holy Roman church, and that the institution and dismissal of all rulers and governors and guardians, howsoever they may be called, who are in charge of the aforesaid lands

and places, and also of the collectors of the said fruits, should be made with the advice and agreement of the cardinals. The holy synod therefore admonishes the cardinals to protect the lands and subjects of the Roman church from harm and oppression and, mindful of their peace, safety and good government, to recommend them, if need be, to the supreme pontiff. While it is true that the supreme pontiff and the cardinals should give careful attention to all the territories of the Roman church, nevertheless the city of Rome should be at the centre of their concern. For there the holy bodies of blessed Peter and Paul and of innumerable martyrs and saints of Christ repose; there is the seat of the Roman pontiff, from which he and the Roman empire take their name; thither all Christians flock for the sake of devotion. They should feel for it a special love and affection, as being peculiarly their daughter and principal parish, so that it should be governed in peace, tranquillity and justice and should suffer no damage to its churches, walls and roads and the security of its streets. Hence this holy synod decrees that from the sum total of the income and proceeds of the city, an adequate portion shall be set aside for the preservation of the churches, walls, roads and bridges and the security of the streets in the city itself and the district; this money is to be administered by men of proven reputation who are to be chosen on the advice of the cardinals.

The supreme pontiff calls himself the servant of the servants of God; let him prove it in deeds. As long as people from all parts have recourse to him as to a common father, he should give them all easy access. Let him set aside at least one day in the week for a public audience, when he shall listen with patience and kindness to all, especially the poor and oppressed, and shall grant their prayers as much as he can with God's help, and shall assist all with kind advice and help as each one has need and as a father does for his children. If he is prevented by some bodily need, he shall entrust this task to some cardinal or other noteworthy person who will report everything to him, and he shall order all officials of the curia, especially the vice-chancellor, the penitentiary and the chamberlain, to expedite business for the poor with speed and free of charge, bearing in mind the apostolic charity of Peter and Paul, who pledged themselves to remember the poor. He should attend a public mass on Sundays and feast-days, and after it for a while he should give audience to the needy. He should hold a public consistory each week, or at least twice a month, to treat of the business of cathedral churches, monasteries, princes and universities and other important affairs. But he should refer lawsuits and lesser matters to the vice-chancellor. He should keep himself free of lawsuits and lesser business as far as he can, so as to be freer to attend to major issues. Since the cardinals of the holy Roman church are considered to be part of the body of the Roman pontiff, it is extremely expedient for the common good that, following ancient custom, serious and difficult questions should hereafter be settled on their advice and direction after mature deliberation, especially the following: decisions on matters of faith; canonizations of saints, erections, suppressions, divisions, subjections or unions of cathedral churches and monasteries; promotions of cardinals; confirmations and provisions relating to cathedral churches and monasteries; deprivations and translations of abbots, bishops and superiors; laws and constitutions; legations a latere or commissions or envoys and nuncios functioning with the authority of

legates a latere; foundations of new religious orders; new exemptions for churches, monasteries and chapels, or the revocation of those already granted without prejudice to the decree of the holy council of Constance about not transferring prelates against their will.

[On the number and qualities of cardinals]

Since the cardinals of the holy Roman church assist the supreme pontiff in directing the Christian commonweal, it is essential that such persons be appointed as may be, like their name, real hinges on which the doors of the universal church move and are upheld. The sacred synod therefore decrees that henceforth their number shall be so adjusted that it is not a burden to the church which now, owing to the malice of the times, is afflicted by many serious inconveniences) or cheapened by being too large. They should be chosen from all the regions of Christianity, as far as this is convenient and possible, so that information on new things in the church may be more easily available for mature consideration. They should not exceed twenty-four in number, including the present cardinals. Not more than a third of them at any given time shall be from one nation, not more than one from any city or diocese. None shall be chosen from that nation which now has more than a third of them, until its share has been reduced to a third. They should be men outstanding in knowledge, good conduct and practical experience, at least thirty years old, and masters, doctors or licentiates who have been examined in divine or human law. At least a third or a quarter of them should be masters or licentiates in holy scripture. A very few of them may be sons, brothers or nephews of kings or great princes; for them an appropriate education will suffice, on account of their experience and maturity of behaviour.

Nephews of the Roman pontiff, related to him through his brother or sister, or of any living cardinal shall not be made cardinals; nor shall bastards or the physically handicapped or those stained by a reputation of crime or infamy. There can, however, be added to the aforesaid twenty-four cardinals, on account of some great necessity or benefit for the church, two others who are outstanding in their sanctity of life and excellence of virtues, even if they do not possess the above-mentioned degrees, and some distinguished men from the Greeks, when they are united to the Roman church. The election of cardinals shall not be made by oral votes alone, rather only those shall be chosen who, after a genuine and publicized ballot, obtain the collegial agreement, signed with their own hands, of the majority of the cardinals. For this purpose let an apostolic letter be drawn up with the signatures of the cardinals. The decree of this sacred council beginning Also since the multiplication of cardinals, etc., which was published in the fourth session, is to remain in force. When cardinals receive the insignia of their dignity, whose meaning is readiness to shed their blood if necessary for the good of the church, they shall take the following oath in a public consistory, if they are in the curia, or publicly in the hands of some bishop commissioned for this purpose by an apostolic letter containing the oath, if they are not in the curia.

I, N., recently chosen as a cardinal of the holy Roman church, from this hour henceforward will be faithful to blessed Peter, to the universal and Roman church and to the supreme pontiff and his canonically elected successors. I will labour faithfully for the defence of the catholic faith, the eradication of heresies errors and schisms, the reform of morals and the peace of the Christian people. I will not consent to alienations of property or goods of the Roman church or of other churches or of any benefices, except in cases allowed by law, and I will strive to the best of my ability for the restoration of those alienated from the Roman church. I will give neither advice nor my signature to the supreme pontiff except for what is according to God and my conscience. I will faithfully carry out whatever I am commissioned to do by the apostolic see. I will maintain divine worship in the church of my title and will preserve its goods: so help me God.

For the preservation of the titular churches of the cardinals, some of which have sadly deteriorated both in divine worship and in their buildings, to the shame of the apostolic see and of the cardinals themselves, this holy synod decrees that from the revenues and incomes of the territories of the Roman church — half of which belongs to the cardinals in accordance with the constitution of Pope Nicholas, as was said above — a tenth of what each cardinal receives shall be applied each year to his titular church. Moreover, each cardinal shall leave to his titular church, either in his lifetime or at his death, enough for the upkeep of one person. If he fails to do so, regarding both this and the said tenth, all his goods shall be sequestrated until due satisfaction has been made. We place the burden of carrying this out on the first cardinal of the order in which he died. Each cardinal present in the curia should make an annual visitation of his titular church in person; each one not present should make it through a suitable deputy. He should also inquire carefully concerning the clergy and the people of his dependent churches, and make useful provision with regard to the divine worship and the goods of these churches as well as the life and conduct of the clergy and parishioners, about whom, since they are his sheep, he will have to render an account at the severe judgment of God. As regards the time of the visitation and other things, let him observe what is laid down in our decree on synodal councils.

Although both the dignity itself and the cardinal's own promise urge him to toil at the holy tasks just mentioned, yet results will be greater if the tasks are spread among individuals. Therefore cardinal-bishops shall inquire about what regions are infected with new or old heresies, errors and superstitions; cardinal-priests shall inquire about where conduct, observance of the divine commandments and ecclesiastical discipline are lax; cardinal-deacons shall inquire about which kings, princes and peoples are troubled by actual or possible wars. Like busy bees, both with the supreme pontiff and among themselves, they should promote these holy works with diligence and in detail, striving to provide a remedy where this is needed. The supreme pontiff for his part, as the common father and pastor of all, should have investigations made everywhere not only when requested to do so but also on his own initiative and he should apply salutary medicines, as best he can, for all the illnesses of his children. If the cardinals ever notice that a pope is negligent or

remiss or acting in a way unbefitting his state, though may this never happen, with filial reverence and charity they shall beg him as their father to live up to his pastoral office, his good name and his duty. First, let one or some of them warn him that if he does not desist they will delate him to the next general council, and if he does not amend they shall all do this as a college together with some notable prelates. For the well-being of the supreme pontiff and the common good they should not fear the hostility of the supreme pontiff himself or anything else, provided they act with reverence and charity. Much more so, if it comes to the pope's notice that some cardinal is acting wrongly and reprehensibly, he should correct him, always with paternal charity and according to evangelical teaching. Thus, acting in charity towards each other, one to another, a father to his sons and sons to their father, let them direct the church with exemplary and salutary government.

Let the cardinals both publicly and privately treat with kindness and respect prelates and all others, especially distinguished persons who come to the Roman curia, and let them present their business to the supreme pontiff freely and graciously. Since the cardinals assist him who is the common father of all, it is very unseemly for them to become acceptors of persons or advocates. Hence this holy synod forbids them to exercise any favouritism as collateral judges, even if they take their origin from a favoured region. Neither should they be biased protectors or defenders of princes or communities or others against anyone, whether paid or unpaid, but putting aside all sentiment let them assist the pope in pacifying quarrels with harmony and justice. The holy synod urges and commends them to promote the just business of princes and anybody else, especially religious and the poor, without charge and without seeking reward, as an act of charity. Let them preserve with readiness and kindness the gravity and modesty that befits their dignity. Let them maintain towards all people godliness which, according to the Apostle, is profitable in every way. Although they should not neglect their kinsfolk, especially if they are deserving and poor, they should not load them with a mass of goods and benefices to the scandal of others. Let them beware of pouring out on flesh and blood, beyond the bounds of necessity, goods coming from the churches. If the pontiff notices such strutting among the great, he should reprimand and object, as is fitting, and he will be blameworthy if he fails to correct, in keeping with his office, whatever needs correction.

The household, table, furniture and horses of both pope and cardinals should not be open to blame as regards quantity, state, display or any other excess. The house and its contents should be on a moderate scale, a model of frugality and not a source of scandal. Both the supreme pontiff and the cardinals, as well as other bishops, should strive to observe the constitution of blessed Gregory which was published at a general synod and which this holy synod now renews the sense of which is as follows: Though the life of a pastor should be an example to disciples, the clergy for the most part do not know the private life-style of their pontiff, even though secular youths know it; we therefore declare by this present decree that certain clerics and even monks should be selected to minister in the pontifical chamber, so that he who

is in the seat of government may have witnesses who will observe his true private behaviour and will draw an example of progress from this regular sight.

Let them also pay attention to the words of Pope Paschal: "Let bishops spend their time in reading and prayer and always have with them priests and deacons and other clerics of good reputation, so that, following the Apostle and the instructions of holy fathers, they may be found without blame."³ It does not profit the commonweal for cases other than those concerning elections to cathedral churches or monasteries, or princes or universities or similar matters, to be assigned by the pope or the chancery to cardinals, since they should devote themselves to the greater problems of the universal church. Lesser cases, therefore, should be sent to the court of the Rota, which was instituted for this purpose. Neither the pope nor cardinals should in future send their officials to prelates who have been confirmed or provided, as it were to accept gifts, lest they allow others to do what is unfitting for themselves to do. Something that has happened in the past — namely a sum of money or something else is subtracted from the goods of a dead cardinal, as a charge for the ring given to him on the assignment of his titular church — is not to occur in the future, since the labours of cardinals for the commonweal merit rather obsequies from public funds, if they are poor.

[On elections]

Already this holy synod, with its abolition of the general reservation of all elective churches and dignities, has wisely decreed that provision should be made for them by canonical elections and confirmations. It wishes also to forbid special and particular reservations of elective churches and dignities, whereby free elections and confirmations can be prevented; and to ensure that the Roman pontiff will attempt nothing against this decree, except for an important, persuasive and clear reason, which should be expressed in detail in an apostolic letter. However, much has been done against the intention of this decree and without the required reason, resulting in serious scandals already and the likelihood of even more serious ones in the future. This holy synod wishes to prevent this and does not want the purpose of the decree, which was to remove every obstacle to canonical elections and confirmations, to be deprived of its effect. It therefore decrees that elections should assuredly be held in the said churches without any impediment or obstacle and that, after they have been examined in accordance with common law and the dispositions of our decree, they shall be confirmed. However, if perhaps on occasion it should happen that an election is made which in other respects is canonical but which, it is feared, will lead to trouble for the church or the country or the common good, the supreme pontiff, when the election is referred to him for confirmation, if he is convinced that there exists such a most pressing reason, after mature discussion and then with the signed votes of the cardinals of the Roman church or the majority of them declaring that the reason is true and sufficient, may reject the election and refer it back to the chapter or convent for them to institute another election, from which such consequences are

not to be feared, within the legal time or otherwise according to the distance of the place.

[On reservations]

The numerous reservations of churches and benefices hitherto made by supreme pontiffs have turned out to be burdensome to churches. Therefore this holy synod abolishes all of them both general and special or particular — for all churches and benefices whatsoever that were customarily provided for by an election or a collation or some other disposition — which were introduced either by the additional canons *Ad regimen* and *Execrabilis* or by rules of the chancery or by other apostolic constitutions, and it decrees that never again shall they exist, with the exception only of reservations expressly contained in the corpus of law and those which occur in the lands mediately or immediately subject to the Roman church by reason of direct or beneficial dominion.

[On Clementine "Letters"]³

Although apostolic and other letters may state that someone has renounced, or been deprived of, a dignity, benefice or right, or has done something for which a right of his has been taken away, nevertheless letters of this sort should not prejudice him, even though they are based on the status or the intention of the person making the statement, unless proof is forthcoming from witnesses or other legitimate documents.

Session 24—14 April 1436

[About business with the Greeks and about indulgences, etc.]

The holy general synod of Basel, legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit, representing the universal church, for an everlasting record. Our ambassadors to the most serene emperor of the Romans and the most reverend lord patriarch of Constantinople, who were sent to Constantinople on behalf and in the name of this holy synod, for various reasons promised to present the terms which were concluded and signed by the two sides on another occasion in this holy synod regarding the manner of holding a universal and ecumenical council of both churches, and to exhibit them with effect, under the customary leaden seal of this holy synod, with the present date and containing the following text word for word. This holy synod, unwilling to omit anything that might help the union of Christ's churches, accepts, approves, ratifies and confirms by this present decree the said promise of its ambassadors and includes in this document the said terms word for word as was promised by the said ambassadors, as follows.

The holy general synod of Basel, legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit, representing the universal church, for an everlasting record. Among the various works necessary for the whole Christian people for which this holy council was assembled, the union of the western and eastern churches of Christ is the chief and greatest. Rightly, therefore, from the very start of its proceedings, this holy synod has made every effort to achieve this. For, as quickly as possible it sent its ambassadors with letters to the most serene emperor of the Greeks and the most reverend patriarch of Constantinople, to exhort them with all charity and insistence that they should send some persons with full authority to treat with us on the way to achieve the said holy union. As soon as they were asked, they appointed to this holy synod three outstanding men from those who seem to be of great authority among them — the first of whom was indeed a blood-relative of the emperor — with a sufficient commission from the emperor himself signed by his own hand and with a golden seal, and furnished with letters of the patriarch. Both in a general congregation and in the presence of our commissaries they expressed the most fervent desire of the emperor, the patriarch and the whole eastern church for this union. They urge and daily stimulate us in a wonderful way to pursue this holy work, strongly and persistently affirming two things: that union is only possible in a universal synod in which both the western church and the eastern church meet, and that it is to be hoped that this union will follow if matters proceed in that synod in the way that is agreed below. We were filled with joy and gladness when we heard this. Therefore we venerable cardinals of the holy Roman church, presidents of the apostolic see, casting all our thoughts on God, who alone does great wonders, deputed the patriarch of Antioch and a suitable number of archbishops, bishops, abbots, masters and doctors to treat of this question with the ambassadors of the Greeks and to look for a way to reach a solution. After these men had frequently met and discussed among themselves and with the ambassadors, they reached the conclusions given below. These conclusions, in accordance with the custom of this council, were seriously debated by the deputations and ratified by a general congregation. Their contents, together with the chrysobull of the lord emperor, are as follows: The ambassadors of the most serene lord emperor, etc., which is given at length in the council's decree which is included above. But because the period of time mentioned above, within which the aforesaid things should have been fulfilled, has elapsed, not through the fault of either party but because of various intervening negotiations, this holy synod therefore accepts the period of time agreed by the most serene emperor of the Greeks and the most reverend patriarch of Constantinople on the one side, and by the ambassadors of this sacred council on the other, namely the year beginning this coming month of May, so that for the whole of this May until the following year each of the two parties is prepared to carry out the aforesaid points, and each accepts and promises that it will fulfil for its part, within the said time, whatever is included in the above-mentioned terms.

[Safe-conduct for the Greeks given by the sacred council of Basel to the lord emperor of the Greeks and the patriarch of Constantinople]

The holy general synod of Basel, legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit, representing the universal church. In our western region and the obedience of the Roman church, a universal and ecumenical synod is to be held, under God's inspiration, at which both the western church and the eastern church will meet in accordance with the agreement reached at this holy synod and later ratified in Constantinople. In order that the sincerity of our intention towards the eastern church may be manifest to all, and that all possible suspicion as regards the security and freedom of those coming to it may be removed, this holy synod of Basel by this present decree, in the name and on behalf of the entire western church and of all in that church of every status, including those of imperial, regal or pontifical rank or of any lower spiritual or secular dignity, authority or office, decrees, gives and concedes a full and free safe-conduct to the most serene emperor of the Greeks, the most reverend patriarchs of Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem, and others up to the number of seven hundred persons, whether of imperial, regal, archiepiscopal or any other rank, dignity or condition, who are coming or shall come to the aforesaid universal and ecumenical council in the west. This holy synod, by this decree, receives and has received into its safe-keeping each and all of the said people, as regards their persons, honours and everything else, in the kingdoms, provinces, lordships, territories, communities, cities, castles, towns, vills and places of our obedience of the western church in which they shall stay or through which they shall pass. It promises and concedes to each and all of them, by this present synodal edict, free and safe permission to approach and enter the city or place in which the said holy universal council will be held; to stay, remain, reside and dwell there with all the immunities, liberties and securities which those of the obedience of the western church dwelling there will have; of debating, arguing and alleging rights and authorities and of saying, doing and treating of, freely and without hindrance from anyone, anything else that may seem to them useful and apt for the union of the churches of Christ.

They may at will go out and return from the said town or place safely, freely and without restraint, once or often or as many times as any of them may wish, singly or together, with or without their goods and money, with every real or personal obstacle ceasing and being put aside, even if the said union does not come about, though may that not be so. In the latter case and in every other outcome, the most serene emperor, the lord patriarchs and other aforesaid persons will be taken back to Constantinople, at our expense and in our galleys, without any delay or obstacle, with the same honours, good will and friendship with which they were brought to the said universal council, whether or not union resulted from the council.

All this is notwithstanding any differences, disagreements or dissensions about the aforesaid matters, or any of them in particular, which exist at present or could arise in the future between the said western and eastern churches, that is, between the Roman church and those subject and attached to it, and the aforesaid most serene emperor and others attached to the church of Constantinople; notwithstanding any judgments, decrees, condemnations, laws or decretals of any kind that have been or shall be made or issued; notwithstanding any crimes, excesses, faults or sins that

may be committed by any of the aforesaid persons; and notwithstanding anything else, even if it is something for which a special mention in this decree is necessary. If one or some of ours should harm one or more of them, though may it not happen, or should molest them in their persons, honour, property or anything else, the miscreant shall be sentenced by us or ours to make adequate and reasonable satisfaction to the injured party. And conversely, if any of them harms any of ours, he shall be sentenced by them to make adequate and reasonable satisfaction to the injured party, in accordance with the customs of both parties. As regards other crimes, excesses and faults, each party will institute proceedings and pass judgment on its own members.

This holy synod exhorts all Christ's faithful and furthermore commands, by the authority of the universal church and in virtue of the holy Spirit and of holy obedience, all prelates, kings, dukes, princes, officials, communities and other individuals, of whatever status, condition or dignity, who are members of our western church, to observe inviolably each and all of the above things and, far as they can, to have them observed; and to honour and treat with favour and reverence, and to have so honoured and treated, both individually and together, the most serene emperor, the patriarch and each and all of the other aforesaid persons on their way to and from the said council. If any doubt arises about the safe-conduct and its contents, it shall be decided by a declaration of the universal synod which is to be held. This holy synod, for its part, wishes the safe-conduct to remain in force until the most serene emperor, the patriarch and other aforesaid persons with their nobles and suites to the number of seven hundred persons, as was stated, and with their goods and chattels, have returned to Constantinople. If anyone attempts to act in any way contrary to the aforesaid or any part of it, let him know that he will incur the indignation of almighty God and of the said holy synod.

Session 25—7 May 1437

[On the places for the future ecumenical council for the Greeks]

The holy general synod of Basel, legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit, representing the universal church, for an everlasting record. Recently this holy synod among the various tasks for which the inscrutable providence of the divine majesty has deigned, by the invocation of the holy Spirit the paraclete, to bring it together and to employ it in the cultivation of the Lord's field, turning its mind like a watchful farmer and clearly perceiving how deplorable and abiding has been the division in God's church over the profession of the same faith by the eastern and western churches, conceived high hope and confidence in the most merciful goodness of him with whom nothing is impossible, and who generously and without restraint gives to all who duly ask him, to bring about the unity of the catholic faith between these churches. It decided, therefore, to apply the resources of its diligence more fully, grudging no labour or expense, because it was convinced that thence

would follow the greater praise and glory of almighty God, a more fruitful salvation of souls and a greater increase of the faith. Desirous of undertaking this most salutary project of union, with the help of the grace of the holy Spirit it invited and exhorted to come to the project, through various envoys and letters, the most serene emperor of the Romans, the venerable patriarch of Constantinople, the other prelates and the rest of the Greek people.

The emperor, the patriarch and others of the Greeks received these exhortations with eagerness, their hearts inclined and influenced by the grace of the most High. Sincerely zealous to embark on this project of union, they decided to send to this holy synod their solemn envoys and spokesmen, who were furnished with an adequate mandate with the golden seal and signature of the emperor and the leaden seal of the patriarch, devoutly expressing their most fervent desire for this unity of faith. This holy synod concluded with them, in various preliminary meetings and deliberations about the execution of this salutary task of union, certain mutually agreed decrees and terms highly useful and necessary for this purpose, which were recorded above and were promulgated in a session of this holy synod in the cathedral of Basel. Thereafter this holy synod wished to implement these decrees and terms by all necessary and suitable means, and therefore to proceed to choosing a place for the coming ecumenical council, to which the aforesaid emperor, the patriarch and others of the Greeks could and should come. After many propositions about these and other topics relevant to this holy matter had been considered by the various deputations of this holy synod, and after the votes of their members on these points had been counted, finally in a general congregation summoned for this purpose in the said cathedral, as is customary, in which the votes of the individuals were again counted, it was found that more than two-thirds of them had voted for Basel, Avignon or Savoy. After they had invoked the grace of the holy Spirit and celebrated a mass, they agreed that due and earnest pressure should be exerted on the emperor, the patriarch and other aforesaid Greeks, with the many good reasons being put before them, so that they might agree to Basel as the place for the ecumenical council, and that if they rejected Basel, it should be held at Avignon. If Avignon proved impossible, it should be held in Savoy.

Therefore, in order that each and all of the aforesaid points might be brought to fruition, with all the solemnity normally employed in this sacred council of Basel in expediting matters of importance, while the fathers are seated in the cathedral of Basel after the mass, this holy synod decrees, wishes, ordains and declares that the future ecumenical council ought to be held at the due and agreed time in the city of Basel or, if that is rejected, in the city of Avignon or otherwise in Savoy, in accordance with the above-mentioned agreement; and that the emperor, the patriarch and other aforesaid Greeks, as detailed in the said terms and decrees, and all other persons of whatever rank, status, dignity or pre-eminence who ought by right or custom to take part in general councils, including those of episcopal rank, are bound and obliged to come to and take part in that ecumenical council, especially so that this salutary work might be completed. This holy synod wishes, declares and decrees this nomination and choice to be firm, fixed and unchangeable. Any modification,

ordinance, disposition, nomination or choice to the contrary that may be made by this holy council or by one or more other persons, whatever their authority, even if it be papal, is utterly invalid; and this holy synod from its certain knowledge as from now quashes, revokes and annuls any such measures, and denounces them as quashed, null and of no effect, and it wishes them to be of no effect and holds them so now, in so far as they impede or oppose in whole or in part the said choice. Also this holy synod from its certain knowledge supplies for any defect that may exist in the aforesaid things or in any of them in particular. Furthermore, since this very difficult undertaking, which will bear great fruit in God's church, as well as the transport and maintenance of the aforesaid Greeks, cannot be accomplished without heavy expenses, it is right and fitting that all of Christ's faithful, especially ecclesiastics, should contribute generously from the substance of the patrimony of our lord Jesus Christ entrusted to them, for the conclusion of so happy a venture. This holy synod therefore imposes on each and every ecclesiastical person, both exempt and non-exempt under whatever form or words, even the order of St John of Jerusalem, of whatever status, dignity, rank, order or condition, even if they are cardinals or bishops, a tenth of all their ecclesiastical fruits and revenues — only daily distributions being excepted — from their churches, monasteries, dignities, offices and other ecclesiastical benefices. This tenth has already been imposed and agreed upon in a general congregation of this holy synod, and this holy synod now decrees and declares that it is to be imposed, and by this decree it imposes it. Furthermore, the said holy synod decrees, wishes, ordains and declares that the venerable bishops John of Luebeck, Luis of Viseu, Delfino of Parma and Louis of Lausanne, envoys of this holy synod, have full power for bringing the Greeks to the place of the ecumenical council, and for the majority of them then present to choose and nominate the Latin port which is most suitable and nearest to the places chosen and nominated above, and to which the said Greeks ought to direct themselves. The synod concedes this power to them by this present decree in accordance with the form of the other letters granted to them in this affair. Finally the same holy synod wishes, ordains and decrees, for the due and desired execution of the aforesaid points and what follows from them, and for the fuller security of the said envoys and of the council, that, at the request of these envoys or of their agents, any other suitable, useful and necessary letters shall be granted, drawn up and despatched in due and correct form by the synod's chancery under the synod's seal.

The holy general synod of Basel, legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit, representing the universal church, for an everlasting record. This holy synod from its outset, in order that those things might be accomplished which general councils are instituted to achieve with the assistance of the holy Spirit, devoted very great care to promoting union between the western and eastern peoples so that, as the church of God has suffered innumerable disasters from the long-standing dissension, the greatest profit might ensue from fraternal union. Therefore it sent envoys to Constantinople for the promotion of this holy work. They returned with the ambassadors of the most serene emperor of the Romans and of the venerable patriarch of Constantinople. After many meetings and mature deliberation on this subject, certain terms were agreed between this sacred council and those

ambassadors and were confirmed by a decree in a public session. By these terms this holy synod bound itself to send envoys with certain sums of money, two large and two smaller galleys and three hundred crossbowmen within a fixed time, and to nominate through these envoys one of the places mentioned in the decree for the ecumenical council, where the emperor and the patriarch with seven hundred persons would meet with us to bring about this holy union.

However, since the time-limit for accomplishing the above is imminent, this holy synod, desirous of fulfilling its promises completely and of bringing to its desired goal this holy endeavour which is the most salutary of all works in these times, came to the following conclusion in its discussions and then in a general congregation: namely, that Florence or Udine in Friuli should be put into the council's hands, or else that there should be chosen for the ecumenical council some other safe place which is mentioned in the decree and is convenient for the pope and the Greeks, that is to say whichever of the aforesaid places shall be quickest to collect and send the galleys, the sums of money and other requisites with the necessary securities. The port would be Venice, Ravenna or Rimini; whichever of them the emperor and the patriarch of Constantinople prefer. Also, so that the clergy are not burdened uselessly, the tenth shall not be decreed or exacted until the Greeks have arrived at one of the above-mentioned ports. Also, that the sacred council should remain in this city during the whole time covered by the decree. Also, that the legates and presidents of the apostolic see, after they have summoned such fathers as shall seem good to them, shall choose the envoys for accompanying the Greeks and for carrying out the aforesaid things; these envoys ought to urge forcibly the choice of this city of Basel. Therefore, in order that each and all of the above may attain due effect, with the assistance of divine grace, in this public and solemn session this holy synod wishes, decrees and declares that the aforesaid decision is definite and valid, to be adhered to and to be implemented. It quashes, voids and annuls, and declares to be quashed, void and null, whatever has been or shall be done, or may be attempted, by any person or persons contrary to the above or its consequences or whatever could in any way impede their execution. And it wishes that the aforesaid apostolic legates and presidents shall compose in due form and under the seal of the council suitable letters for the execution of the above, and shall expedite whatever else may be necessary and appropriate for this holy enterprise.

Introduction and translation taken from Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, ed.
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The Apocryphal Books The Assumption of Moses and 1 Enoch Does the Bible quote them and does that prove Tradition?

The Apocryphal Book the Assumption of Moses

Jude 9- Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, *The Lord rebuke thee.*

Catholics will refer to this verse and claim that it is quoting a non-canonical scripture called the Assumption of Moses, in an attempt to disprove the principle of Sola Scriptura (The Bible only for doctrine). The logic for this I assume to be the following:

If the Bible quotes from a non-canonical book, then the Bible is validating the authenticity of that book, as inspired of God to the same level as the Bible itself. Consequently, any doctrinal teaching in this book not taught by the Bible itself, must in any case be just as inspired as the Bible, thus validating the authority of Catholic Tradition. By this logic, Sola Scriptura is proposed to be disproved, since an extra-biblical book is then assumed to be the "inspired word of God" on a par with the authority of Scripture.

So what of this logic, and what proof is there that the Jude 9 quotes this non-canonical book? Well, it was claimed by early church writers- Clement of Alexandria, Origen, and Didymus that Jude 9 is a quotation from the book of The Assumption of Moses, yet interestingly enough, there is apparently no surviving portion of that "pseudepigraphical" book containing the passage, that exists today from which to validate or even investigate that claim.

In spite of this, lets consider the matter some. Note the following verse from the Bible-

Zec 3:1 And he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him.

Zec 3:2 And the LORD said unto Satan, **The LORD rebuke thee**, O Satan; even the LORD that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?

I would propose first of all that Jude 9 is quoting from, or referring back to the similar passage in Zechariah, since this is the only two places in the Bible that exact phrase *The Lord rebuke thee* occurs and the general circumstances are similar in both cases; the words are spoken by the Lord to Satan.

Now, let's assume for the moment that the "Assumption of Moses" did contain a very similar, if not identical phrase as Jude 9. Is it not reasonable to assume that perhaps it was *also* a quote from Zechariah? Zechariah is dated to about 500 B.C. Jude is dated to about 80 A.D. The

Assumption of Moses, written by a Pharisee, is estimated to also date to the 1st century A.D. Is it just possible that *both* Jude and the Assumption of Moses were quoting from the exact same source- Zechariah? I think it is at least a possibility, but at a minimum, there is apparently no existing proof that Jude quotes the Assumption of Moses.

But let's go even one step farther, for the sake of argument, and assume that it could be proved that Jude did in fact quote from the Assumption of Moses. That does not in and of itself automatically make the Assumption of Moses canon, or even inspired, and from what I can determine, only fragments of it still exist.

Virtually all the books considered over time to be apocryphal (by both Catholics and Protestants) can be expected to contain at least some truth in them. And they may even have some accurate historical accounts of Jesus or the disciples that did not make it into the canon. There are many parallels and similarities between canon and the pseudepigraphical books, but these books were generally rejected because of obvious flaws of one kind or another in doctrine or content that are apparent to virtually all Christian readers who have studied them. They are worth reading and studying, but they are not considered by the Christian community as a whole to be "the infallible word of God".

So a quote in scripture of a deuterocanonical / apocryphal book, while it might be considered by some to be weighty evidence for canonicity, it would clearly not be the only proof necessary. Of note is the fact that not a single apocryphal book in existence today is quoted *by name* in any of the accepted New Testament canon. Jesus Himself quotes from several Old Testament books identified by name (Lk 4:17-20, Lk 20:42, Lk 24:44), to illustrate the point. That kind of validation is lacking for the Assumption of Moses and every other apocryphal book. So, upon examination, I fail to see how there is any proof to bolster Catholic Tradition here, or how this case in any way undermines or disproves the principle of Sola Scriptura.

The Catholics, in this instance, are citing a nonexistent passage from an incomplete fragmentary book and taking the word of early church fathers as proof. It appears to me that they are trying to prove Tradition from tradition, which on the face of it appears to be absolutely no proof at all.

The Apocryphal Book of 1 Enoch-

Another case is Jude 14-15, which appears to be a quote from 1 Enoch, which is also known as the Apocalypse of Enoch-

1 Enoch 1:9 And behold! He cometh with ten thousands of His holy ones to execute judgment upon all, and to destroy all the ungodly; and to convict all flesh of all the works of their ungodliness which they have ungodly committed, and of all the hard things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.

Jude 14 And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints,

Jude 15 To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all

their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.

First it should be noted that Jude is quoting Enoch himself, not from a book of Enoch. Second, there is apparently some question as to the exact dating of both Jude and 1 Enoch. Jude is by a single author, and is estimated by scholars to have been written from the mid to later half of the 1st century, while 1 Enoch was apparently written by several authors over a time period from about 200 B.C. to about the middle of the first century. This does seem to allow for at least the possibility that 1 Enoch is actually quoting Jude.

While the two passages are clearly quite similar, this type of similarity is apparently not all that uncommon between Canon and apocrypha. But this does not make the case for unbiblical doctrines. This passage in Jude is not the only one to speak of the return of Jesus for the purpose of judgment. The book of Revelation, for one, speaks to this event quite clearly, so neither Jude nor 1 Enoch reveal anything new in this regard. To make their case, the Catholic must authenticate unbiblical doctrines, which by definition neither have, nor require, the support of any canonical scripture.

I think the point the Catholic tries to make is that Canon owes its very existence to tradition and that tradition predates the scriptures.

2 Th 2:15 Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.

Paul here clearly states that tradition (small "t") can be passed on either orally or by the written word. It is not uncommon for the Catholic to blur the differences in tradition and Tradition. Every sermon ever given qualifies as tradition. The Bible itself is tradition. But is that the same as Tradition (big "T" Catholic style unbiblical doctrine)? No it is not. The Roman Catholic Church claims Tradition stands on its own, without any support from the Bible, as an inspired source of the word of God equal to the Bible. There is a major distinction there that must not be lost in any discussion.

I expect that much if not all of the Gospel message of the New Testament was oral tradition before being reduced to writing. Both Jude and 1 Enoch could be quoting from this oral tradition, rather than one from the other. In any case, this does not validate Roman Catholic Tradition, since the topic of both passages introduces nothing new in doctrine. The only thing that may be considered "new" is that the passage is attributed to Enoch. Since Jude recorded it, I believe it to be true. That Jude may be quoting from 1 Enoch does not make the rest of 1 Enoch canonical or even inspired. I am willing to accept that there may be true doctrines and historical accounts in some of the apocryphal books, but scripture quoting from those portions (assuming it does) does not in any way validate the completely unbiblical Roman Catholic doctrines of Tradition.



<http://www.aloha.net/~mikesch/>

Roman Catholic and Orthodox Faith Examined and The Apocrypha

"The Jewish canon, or the Hebrew Bible, was universally received, while the Apocrypha added to the Greek version of the Septuagint were only in a general way accounted as books suitable for church reading, and thus as a middle class between canonical and strictly apocryphal (pseudonymous) writings. And justly; for those books, while they have great historical value, and fill the gap between the Old Testament and the New, all originated after the cessation of prophecy, and they cannot therefore be regarded as inspired, nor are they ever cited by Christ or the apostles" (Philip Schaff, History of the Christian Church, book 3, chapter 9)

21 reasons why the Apocrypha is not inspired:

1. The Roman Catholic Church did not officially canonize the Apocrypha until the Council of Trent (1546 AD). This was in part because the Apocrypha contained material which supported certain Catholic doctrines, such as purgatory, praying for the dead, and the treasury of merit.
2. Not one of them is in the Hebrew language, which was alone used by the inspired historians and poets of the Old Testament.
3. Not one of the writers lays any claim to inspiration.
4. These books were never acknowledged as sacred Scriptures by the Jewish Church, and therefore were never sanctioned by our Lord.
5. They were not allowed a place among the sacred books, during the first four centuries of the Christian Church.
6. They contain fabulous statements, and statements which contradict not only the canonical Scriptures, but themselves; as when, in the two Books of Maccabees, Antiochus Epiphanes is made to die three different deaths in as many different places.
7. The Apocrypha inculcates doctrines at variance with the Bible, such as prayers for the dead and sinless perfection.

And the day following Judas came with his company, to take away the bodies of them that were slain, and to bury them with their kinsmen, in the sepulchers of their fathers. And they found under the coats of the slain some of the donaries of the idols of Jamnia, which the law forbiddeth to the Jews: so that all plainly saw, that for this cause they were slain. Then they all blessed the just judgment of the Lord, who had discovered the things that were hidden. And so betaking themselves to prayers, they besought him, that the sin which had been committed might be forgotten. But the most valiant Judas exhorted the people to keep themselves from sin, forasmuch as they saw before their eyes what had happened, because of the sins of those that were slain. And making a gathering, he sent twelve thousand drachmas of silver to Jerusalem for sacrifice to be offered for the sins of the dead, thinking well and religiously concerning the resurrection, (For if he had not hoped that they that were slain should rise again,

it would have seemed superfluous and vain to pray for the dead,) And because he considered that they who had fallen asleep with godliness, had great grace laid up for them. **It is therefore a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from sins.** (2 Maccabees 12:39-46)

8. The apocrypha contains offensive materials unbecoming of God's authorship.

Ecclesiasticus 25:19 Any iniquity is insignificant compared to a wife's iniquity.

Ecclesiasticus 25:24 From a woman sin had its beginning. Because of her we all die.

Ecclesiasticus 22:3 It is a disgrace to be the father of an undisciplined, and the birth of a daughter is a loss.

9. It teaches immoral practices, such as lying, suicide, assassination and magical incantation.
10. The apocryphal books themselves make reference to what we call the Silent 400 years, where there was no prophets of God to write inspired materials.

And they laid up the stones in the mountain of the temple in a convenient place, **till there should come a prophet**, and give answer concerning them. (1 Maccabees 4:46)

And there was a great tribulation in Israel, such as was not since the day, that **there was no prophet seen in Israel.** (1 Maccabees 9:27)

And that the Jews, and their priests, had consented that he should be their prince, and high priest for ever, **till there should arise a faithful prophet.** (1 Maccabees 14:41)

11. Josephus rejected the apocryphal books as inspired and this reflected Jewish thought at the time of Jesus

"From Artexerxes to our own time the complete history has been written but has not been deemed worthy of equal credit with the earlier records **because of the failure of the exact succession of the prophets.**" ... "We have not an innumerable multitude of books among us, disagreeing from and contradicting one another, but only twenty-two books, which contain the records of all the past times; which are justly believed to be divine..."(Flavius Josephus, Against Apion 1:8)

12. The Manual of Discipline in the Dead Sea Scrolls rejected the apocrypha as inspired.
13. The Council of Jamnia held the same view rejected the apocrypha as inspired.

They debated the canonicity of a few books (e.g., Ecclesiastes), but they changed nothing and never proclaimed themselves to be authoritative determiners of the Old Testament canon. "The books which they decided to acknowledge as canonical were already generally accepted, although questions had been raised about them. Those which they refused to admit had never been included. They did not expel from the canon any book which had previously been admitted. 'The Council of Jamnia was the confirming of public opinion, not the forming of it.'" (F. Bruce, The Books and Parchments [Old Tappan, NJ.: Fleming H. Revell, 1963], p. 98)

14. Although it was occasionally quoted in early church writings, it was nowhere accepted in a canon. Melito (AD 170) and Origen rejected the Apocrypha, (Eccl. Hist. VI. 25, Eusebius) as does the Muratorian Canon.
15. Jerome vigorously resisted including the Apocrypha in his Latin Vulgate Version (400 AD), but was overruled. As a result, the standard Roman Catholic Bible throughout the medieval period contained it. Thus, it gradually came to be revered by the average clergyman. Still, many medieval Catholic scholars realized that it was not inspired.
16. The terms "protocanonical" and "deuterocanonical" are used by Catholics to signify respectively those books of Scripture that were received by the entire Church from the beginning as inspired, and those whose inspiration came to be recognized later, after the matter had been disputed by certain Fathers and local churches.
17. Pope Damasus (366-384) authorized Jerome to translate the Latin Vulgate. The Council of Carthage declared this translation as "the infallible and authentic Bible." Jerome was the first to describe the extra 7 Old Testament books as the "Apocrypha" (doubtful authenticity). Needless to say, Jerome's Latin Vulgate did not include the Apocrypha.
18. Cyril (born about A.D. 315) - "Read the divine Scriptures - namely, the 22 books of the Old Testament which the 72 interpreters translated" (the Septuagint)
19. The apocrypha wasn't included at first in the Septuagint, but was appended by the Alexandrian Jews, and was not listed in any of the catalogues of the inspired books till the 4th century
20. Hilary (bishop of Poitiers, 350 A.D.) rejected the apocrypha (Prologue to the Psalms, Sec. 15)
21. Epiphanius (the great opposer of heresy, 360 A.D.) rejected them all. Referring to Wisdom of Solomon & book of Jesus Sirach, he said "These indeed are useful books & profitable, but they are not placed in the number of the canonical."

Is the Apocrypha Inspired? Does it really belong in the Bible?

Let us consider while we are at this point, the subject of the Catholic apocrypha, for which they make such great claims; and because of which they deny the Bible in common use by most brethren. 2 Macc 12:38-46 seems to be the principal reason they cling to the apocrypha. There is no other doctrine that depends so heavily upon support in the apocrypha. If I were not afraid of absolute statements, I would say that their defense of the apocrypha is only because of the passage and their claims about its teachings.

The Catholics have 46 Old Testament books rather than the 39 found in our Bibles. However, they have added much more material to other books which does not appear under separate titles. That material follows: The Rest of Esther added to Esther; The Song of the Three Holy Children, The History of Susanna, Bel and the Dragon added to Daniel; Baruch; 1 and 2 Maccabees; Tobias; Judith; Ecclesiasticus; and the Wisdom of Sirach.

The only powerful support for these books is that they appear in the Septuagint version. However, in many of our Bibles there is much material that is uninspired, including history, poetry, maps, dictionaries, and other information. This may be the reason for the appearance of this material in the Septuagint. The apocrypha was not in the Hebrew canon.

There are reputed to be 263 quotations and 370 allusions to the Old Testament in the New Testament and not one of them refers to the Apocryphal

The usual division of the Old Testament by the Jews was a total of 24 books: The Books of Moses (5), The Early prophets (14; Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings ~), The Late Prophets (4; Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, the 12 Minor Prophets), and the Hagiographa (11; Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Song of Solomon, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Daniel, Ezra-Nehemiah, and Chronicles i). These 24 books contain all the material in our numbering of 39.

Josephus spoke concerning the canon, but his book division combined Ruth-Judges and Lamentation-Jeremiah for a total of 22 books rather than 24:

"For we have not an innumerable multitude of books among us, ... only 22 books. which contain the records of ail the past times; which are justly believed to be divine;...It is true, our history hath been written since Artaxerxes very particularly, but hath not been esteemed of the like authority with the former by our forefathers;...and how firmly we have given credit to these books of our own nation is evident by what we do; for during so many ages as have already passed, no one has been so bold as either to add anything to them, or to make any change in them." (Flavius Josephus Against Apion Book 1, Section 8).

Plainly Josephus distinguishes between those books written before and after Artaxerxes. This eliminates most of the apocrypha, especially the Maccabees.

The apocrypha itself denies all notion of inspiration. Referring to the events in the Maccabees the author makes these statements:

"...all such things as have been comprised in 5 books by Jason of Cyrene, we have at-tempted to abridge in one book. For considering the difficulty that they find that desire to undertake the narrations of histories, because of the multitude of the matter, we have taken care for those indeed that are willing to read,...And as to ourselves indeed, in undertaking this work of abridging, we have taken in hand no easy task, yea. rather a business full of watching and sweat. .. Leaving to the authors the exact handling of every particular, and as for ourselves. according to the plan proposed, studying to brief... For to collect all that is known, to put the discourse in order, and curiously to discuss every particular point, is the duty of the author of a history. But to pursue brevity of speech and to avoid nice declarations of things, is to be granted to him that maketh an abridgement." (2 Maccabees 2: 24-32).

"...I will also here make an end of my narration. Which if I have done well, and as it becometh the history, it is what I desired; but if not so perfectly, it must be pardoned me. For as it is hurtful to drink always wine, or always water, but pleasant to use sometimes the one, and sometimes the other, so if the speech be always nicely framed, it will not be grateful to the readers..." 12 Maccabees 15: 39-40).

This forms a bizarre contrast with passages in the New Testament:

"Take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak. but the spirit of your Father which speaketh in you" (Matthew 10: 19-20).

"Now we have received. not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God: that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in words which man s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth" (1 Corinthians 2: 12-13).

Catholic arguments:

Catholics argue:

Early Christians quote from the apocrypha proves it belongs in the Bible

They were included in the Septuagint.

The Church Councils at Hippo (393) and Carthage (397, 419), listed the apocrypha as Scripture. Since these same councils also finalized the 66 canonical books which all Christians accept, they must accept them all.

This is refuted because:

Early Christians quoted from all kinds of uninspired writings other than the apocrypha. Why do Catholics not include these in their Bible's


The Jews Never accepted the apocrypha as part of the Old testament canon.

False. The canon of the New Testament was set from the first century. It is Catholic myth that Catholics gave the world the Bible!

The New Testament never quotes from the any of the apocryphal books written between 400 - 200 BC. What is significant here is that NONE of the books within the "apocryphal collection" are every quoted. So the Catholic argument that "the apocryphal books cannot be rejected as uninspired on the basis that they are never quoted from in the New Testament because Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon are also never quoted in the New Testament, and we all accept them as inspired." The rebuttal to this Catholic argument is that "Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther" [were always included in the "history collection" of Jewish books](#) and "Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon" were always included in the "poetry collection". By quoting one book from the collection, it verifies the entire collection. None of the apocryphal books were ever quoted in the New Testament. Not even once! This proves the Catholic and Orthodox apologists wrong when they try to defend the apocrypha in the Bible.

The apocrypha does not belong in the Bible because It IS not inspired.

Steve Rudd



Go To Truth

Roman Catholic Church

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Papal Infallibility (Sola.Popa)



Unbiblical Organization (Sola.Roma)



Catholic VS. Orthodox



Stumper Questions



Creeds and Oral Tradition



Unbiblical Doctrine



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27 Book Bible Canon



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Apocrypha Not Inspired



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Fighting Back!

A Handy Reference For King James Bible Believers

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Published by Bible Baptist Church, Sharon, TN

NOTE: This handy reference is available in a printed version. It is 38 pages and measures only 4" X 7". It is an excellent King James "quick" and inexpensive resource for distribution. It covers a lot of material in a few pages. It is available from [James L. Melton](#). A twenty-five cent donation per booklet is appreciated, but not required. More information on ordering tracts from Brother Melton is at the end of this tract.

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Introduction

As Bible-believing Christians, we believe that the words of the King James Authorized Version are the pure and preserved words of God for the English speaking people. This booklet has been written to help fellow Bible-believers defend themselves against the fiery darts of the wicked Laodiceans and Alexandrians who do not believe that any human being should have a printed final authority to guide him through this wicked world of darkness and deceit.

I realize it is unusual to see such a brief booklet addressing so many subjects, but it is my personal belief that this is what many people need in these last days. *The Bible Believer's Helpful Little Handbook* has been well accepted by Christians because of it's variety, it's brevity, and it's scriptural content. I've tried to stick to that same basic principle in this booklet. Since this is mainly a reference guide, it isn't necessary for you to read the entire booklet in order to appreciate many of the truths it contains. Each small section contains valuable truths that the active Bible-believer will find helpful time after time. However, if you'll take the time to read the entire booklet, you will learn many things that will increase your faith in God's preserved word. You will also become more equipped to do battle with the Alexandrian apostates who work endlessly in their efforts to replace your two-edged sword with a toothpick. These people take great delight in ridiculing and intimidating people like you and I, and far too often they win because we do not know the answers. With a good knowledge of the information in the forthcoming pages, you CAN know the answers and you can win a few battles of your own.

I urge you to become familiar with this little booklet. Mark or highlight the special places that will be most useful to you. Keep a copy close by and when the moment is right, USE IT!

The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever.
(Psa. 12:6-7)

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Reasons for Accepting the KJV as God's Preserved Word

1. God promised to preserve His words (Psa. 12:6-7; Mat. 24:35). There has to be a preserved copy of God's pure words somewhere. If it isn't the KJV, then what is it?
2. It has no copyright. The *text* of the KJV may be reproduced by anyone for there is no copyright forbidding its duplication. This is not true with the modern perversions.
3. The KJV produces good fruit (Mat. 7:17-20). No modern translation can compare to the KJV when it comes to *producing good fruit*. For nearly four hundred years, God has used the preaching and teaching of the KJV to bring hundreds of millions to Christ. Laodicean Christians might favor the new versions, but the Holy Spirit doesn't.
4. The KJV was translated during the Philadelphia church period (Rev. 3:7-13). The modern versions begin to appear rather late on the scene as the lukewarm Laodicean period gets underway (Rev. 3:14-22), but the KJV was produced way back in 1611, just in time for the many great revivals (1700-1900). The Philadelphia church was the only church that did not receive a rebuke from the Lord Jesus Christ, and it was the only church that "kept" God's word (Rev. 3:8).
5. The KJV translators were honest in their work. When the translators had to add certain words, largely due to idiom changes, they placed the added words in italics so we'd know the difference. This is not the case with many new translations.
6. All new translations compare themselves to the KJV. Isn't it strange that the new versions never compare themselves to one another? For some strange reason they all line up against one Book--the A.V. 1611. I wonder why? Try Matthew 12:26.
7. The KJV translators believed they were handling the very words of God (I Ths. 2:13). Just read the King James Dedicatory and compare it to the prefaces in the modern versions. Immediately, you will see a world of difference in the approach and attitude of the translators. Which group would YOU pick for translating a book?
8. The KJV is supported by far more evidence. Of over 5,300 pieces of manuscript evidence, ninety-five percent supports the King James Bible! The changes in the new versions are based on the remaining five percent of manuscripts, most of which are from Alexandria, Egypt. (There are only two lines of Bibles: *the Devil's line from Alexandria, and the Lord's line from Antioch*. We'll deal with this later.)
9. No one has ever proven that the KJV is not God's word. The 1611 should be considered innocent until proven guilty with a significant amount of genuine manuscript evidence.
10. The KJV exalts the Lord Jesus Christ. The true scriptures should testify of Jesus Christ (John 5:39). There is no book on this planet which exalts Christ higher than the King James Bible. In numerous places the new perversions attack the Deity of Christ, the Blood Atonement, the Resurrection, salvation by grace through faith, and the Second Coming. The true scriptures will *TESTIFY* of Jesus Christ, not *ATTACK* Him!

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Questions for the KJV Critics

1. Since you're smart enough to find "mistakes" in the KJV, why don't you correct them all and give us a perfect Bible?
2. Do you have a perfect Bible?
3. Since you do believe "the Bible" is our final authority in all matters of faith and *practice*, could you please show us where Jesus, Peter, James, Paul, or John ever *practiced* your terminology ("the Greek text says...the Hebrew text says....the originals say...a better rendering would be....older manuscripts read...." etc.)?
4. Since you do not profess to have a perfect Bible, why do you refer to it as "God's word"?
5. Remembering that the Holy Spirit is the greatest Teacher (John 16:12-15; I John 2:27), who taught you that the King James Bible was not infallible, the Holy Spirit or man?
6. Since you do believe in the degeneration of man and in the degeneration of the world system in general, why is it that you believe education has somehow "evolved" and that men are more qualified to translate God's word today than in 1611?
7. There is one true God, yet many false gods. There is one true Church, consisting of true born-again believers in Christ, yet there are many false churches. So why do you think it's so wrong to teach that there is one true Bible, yet many false "bibles"?
8. Isn't it true that you believe God inspired His holy words in the "originals," but has since *lost* them, since no one has a perfect Bible today?
9. Isn't it true that when you use the term "the Greek text" you are being deceitful and lying, since there are MANY Greek TEXTS (plural), rather than just one?
10. Before the first new perversion was published in 1881 (the RV), the King James Bible was published, preached, and taught throughout the world. God blessed these efforts and hundreds of millions were saved. Today, with the many new translations on the market, very few are being saved. The great revivals are over. Who has gained the most from the new versions, God or Satan?

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Seventy-five Common Sayings

The King James Bible is supposedly written in an "old and archaic language" that people today have trouble understanding, but please notice how so many of our modern sayings come from between it's covers. Hundreds could be presented, but we'll limit ourselves to seventy-five:

1. Genesis 4:2-5: *can't get blood from a turnip*
2. Genesis 7: *don't miss the boat*
3. Genesis 11:7-9: *babbling*
4. Genesis 15:5: *teller*
5. Genesis 43:34: *mess (of food)*
6. Exodus 19:16-18: *holy smoke*
7. Exodus 28:42: *britches*
8. Exodus 32:8: *holy cow*
9. Leviticus 2:14: *roast ears*
10. Leviticus 13:10: *the quick (raw flesh)*
11. Leviticus 14:5-6: *running water*
12. Leviticus 16:8: *scapegoat*
13. Leviticus 25:10: *Liberty Bell*
14. Numbers 21:5: *light bread*
15. Numbers 35:2-5: *suburb*
16. Deuteronomy 2:14: *wasted him*
17. Deuteronomy 24:5: *cheer up*
18. Deuteronomy 32:10: *apple of his eye*
19. Judges 5:20: *star wars*
20. Judges 7:5-12: *under dog*
21. Judges 8:16: *teach a lesson*
22. Judges 17:10: *calling a priest father*
23. I Samuel 14:12: *I'll show you a thing or two*

24. I Samuel 20:40: *artillery*
25. I Samuel 25:37: *petrified*
26. II Samuel 19:18: *ferry boat*
27. I Kings 3:7: *don't know if he's coming or going*
28. I Kings 14:3: *cracklins*
29. I Kings 14:6: *that's heavy*
30. I Kings 21:19-23: *she's gone to the dogs*
31. II Chronicles 9:6: *you haven't heard half of it*
32. II Chronicles 30:6: *postman*
33. Nehemiah 13:11: *set them in their place*
34. Esther 7:9: *he hung himself*
35. Job 11:16: *It's water under the bridge*
36. Job 20:6: *he has his head in the clouds*
37. Psalm 4:8: *lay me down to sleep*
38. Psalm 19:3-4: *he gave me a line*
39. Psalm 37:13: *his day is coming*
40. Psalm 58:8: *pass away (dying)*
41. Psalm 64:3-4: *shoot off your mouth*
42. Psalm 78:25: *angel's food cake*
43. Psalm 141:10: *give him enough rope and he'll hang himself*
44. Proverbs 7:22: *dumb as an ox*
45. Proverbs 13:24: *spare the rod, spoil the child*
46. Proverbs 18:6: *he is asking for it*

47. Proverbs 24:16: *can't keep a good man down*
48. Proverbs 25:14: *full of hot air*
49. Proverbs 30:30: *king of beasts*
50. Ecclesiastes 10:19: *money talks*
51. Ecclesiastes 10:20: *a little bird told me*
52. Song Solomon 2:5: *lovesick*
53. Isaiah 52:8: *see eye to eye*
54. Jeremiah 23:25: *I have a dream (MLK, Jr)*
55. Ezekiel 26:9: *engines*
56. Ezekiel 38:9: *desert storm or storm troopers*
57. Daniel 3:21: *hose (leg wear)*
58. Daniel 8:25: *foreign policy*
59. Daniel 11:38: *the force be with you (star wars)*
60. Hosea 7:8: *half-baked*
61. Jonah 4:10-11: *can't tell left from right*
62. Zephaniah 3:8-9: *United Nations Assembly*
63. Matthew 25:1-10: *burning the midnight oil*
64. Matthew 25:33: *right or left side of an issue*
65. Matthew 27:46: *for crying out loud*
66. Mark 5:13: *hog wild*
67. Luke 11:46: *won't lift a finger to help*
68. Luke 15:17: *he came to himself*
69. Romans 2:23: *breaking the law*

70. Philippians 3:2: *beware of dog*
71. Colossians 2:14: *they nailed him*
72. I John 5:11-13: *get a life*
73. Revelation 6:8: *hell on earth*
74. Revelation 16:13: *a frog in my throat*
75. Revelation 20:15: *go jump in the lake*

If you've checked these references, then you can easily see how our all-wise God has played a beautiful joke on the modern revisionists. *People who do not even believe the KJV quote it every day!* Furthermore, if you'll grab yourself a NIV, a NCV, a TEV, or anything else, you'll find that many of these modern sayings have been destroyed by the "better language" of the Laodiceans.

For example, I always thought that when I was a young boy my father and I crossed the Mississippi on a *ferry boat* (II Sam. 19:18), but I guess we must have *crossed at the ford* instead (NIV). Then there were times when I got out of line and dad would really *set me in my place* (Neh. 13:11). Too bad he didn't have a NIV, for he could have *stationed me at my post*. I guess there was nothing dad loved more than going out early on Saturday mornings and catching a *mess* of fish (Gen. 43:34). It's a good thing we didn't have a NKJV in those days, for he would have only caught a *serving*. We usually had hushpuppies with that fish dinner, but sometimes we just had *light bread* (Num. 21:5). That is, until the neighbors came over with their New American Bible. Then we had *wretched food*. Then dad would always say, "*Cheer up*, son, it'll be better next time!" (Deu. 24:5) Too bad he didn't have a NKJV, for I'm sure he would have said, "Come on, boy, *bring happiness* to yourself!"

So you get the point: *the new versions don't stand a chance when competing with the KJV to use the most "modern" speech!* Go ahead, have yourself some fun. Learn to appreciate God's sense of humor! Grab a new translation and see first hand how the modern versions are still stuck in the Dark Ages when it comes to keeping up with modern speech.

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The Italicized Words

If we are to believe what we hear from the critics, then we must accept the notion that the italicized words in the King James Bible do not belong. We are told that the words were added by the translators and are not the words of God. If this is true, then please explain why Luke, Paul, John, Peter, and even the Lord Jesus QUOTE them! The column on the right shows how New Testament writers and speakers QUOTE the King James italics of the Old Testament:

OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURE	NEW TESTAMENT QUOTE
I have set the LORD always before me: because <i>he is</i> at my right hand, I shall not be moved. (Psa. 16:8)	For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: (Acts 2:25)
Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out <i>the corn</i> . (Deu. 25:4)	For it is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen? (I Cor. 9:9. Also see I Tim. 5:18)
And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every <i>word</i> that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live. (Deu. 8:3)	But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. (Mat. 4:4)
I have said, Ye <i>are</i> gods; and all of you <i>are</i> children of the most High. (Psa. 82:6)	Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? (John 10:34)
Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner <i>stone</i> , a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste. (Isa. 28:16)	Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. (I Pet. 2:6)

Did you notice that the New Testament writers QUOTE the words in italics? This means they WERE actually in the originals! When Jesus said, "It is written..." (Mat. 4:4), he was saying that the word "word" was also written--*even if the King James translators didn't have it in the Hebrew Old Testament!* Like it or not, the Holy Spirit led them to use the word anyhow! If He didn't, then why did Jesus quote it?

Also, we have the case of *WHO killed Goliath?* II Samuel 21:19 in the KJV says: "And there was again a battle in Gob with the Philistines, where Elhanan the son of Jaareoregim, a Bethlehemite, slew *the brother of* Goliath the Gittite, the staff of whose spear *was* like a weaver's beam." The words "*the brother of*" are in italics. If these words were omitted, then the Bible would say that Elhanan slew Goliath, instead of his brother, which would contradict the fact that David killed Goliath. (In fact, this is exactly how the New World Translation reads!) If you'll check I

Chronicles 20:5, you'll see that the italics of II Samuel 21:19 are well justified. Moral: *The English sheds light on the English--WITHOUT "the Greek."*

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Antioch vs. Alexandria

We hear much talk these days about "older" and "more authoritative" manuscripts, but we aren't hearing much about the *origin* of these manuscripts. It is a well established fact that there are only two lines of Bibles: one coming from Antioch, Syria (known as the Syrian or Byzantine type text), and one coming from Alexandria, Egypt (known as the Egyptian or Hesyncnian type text). The Syrian text from Antioch is the Majority text from which our King James 1611 comes, and the Egyptian text is the minority text from which the new perversions come. (Never mind Rome and her *Western* text, for she got her manuscripts from Alexandria.)

The manuscripts from Antioch were mostly copied by Bible-believing Christians for the purpose of winning souls and spreading the word of God. The manuscripts from Alexandria were produced by infidels such as Origen Adamantius and Clement of Alexandria. These manuscripts are corrupted with Greek philosophy (Col. 2:8), and allegorical foolishness (not believing God's word literally). The strange thing is that most Christians aren't paying any attention to what God's word says about these two places! Notice how the Holy Spirit casts Egypt and Alexandria in a NEGATIVE light, while His comments on Antioch tend to be very positive:

Egypt and Alexandria

1. Egypt is first mentioned in connection with Abraham not trusting Egyptians around his wife (Gen. 12:10-13).
2. One of the greatest types of Christ in the Bible was sold into Egypt as a slave (Gen. 37:36).>
3. Joseph did not want his bones left in Egypt (Gen. 50:25).
4. God killed all the firstborn of Egypt (Exo. 12:12).
5. God calls Egypt "the house of bondage" (Exo. 20:4).
6. God calls Egypt an "iron furnace" (Deu. 4:20).
7. The Kings of Israel were even forbidden to get horses from Egypt (Deu. 17:16), so why should we look there for a Bible?
8. The Jews were forbidden to go to Egypt for help (Jer. 42:13-19).
9. God plans to punish Egypt (Jer. 46:25).

10. God calls His Son out of Egypt (Hos. 11:1; Mat. 2:15).
11. Egypt is placed in the same category as Sodom (Rev. 11:8).
12. The first time Alexandria is mentioned in the Bible, it is associated with unbelievers, persecution, and the eventual death of Stephen (Acts 6:9; 7:54-60).
13. The next mention of Alexandria involves a lost preacher who has to be set straight on his doctrine (Acts 18:24-26).
14. The last two times we read about Alexandria is in Acts 27:6 and Acts 28:11. Here we learn that Paul was carried to his eventual death in Rome by two ships from Alexandria .

Alexandria was the second largest city of the Roman Empire, with Rome being the first. It was founded in 332 B.C. by Alexander the Great (a type of the Antichrist in Daniel 8). Located at the Nile Delta, Alexandria was the home of the Pharos Lighthouse, one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient world. Also, during the second and third centuries B.C., it was the home of a massive library containing between 500,000 and 700,000 volumes. It was also the home of a catechetical school once headmastered by the great apostate Adamantius Origen (185-254 A.D.).

QUESTION: In light of what God's word says about higher knowledge and philosophy (I Cor. 1:22; Rom. 1:22; Gen. 3:5; Col. 2:8; I Cor. 8:1), why would any serious Christian expect to find the true word of God in Alexandrian manuscripts?

Antioch

1. Upon it's first mention, we find that Antioch is the home of a Spirit-filled deacon (Acts 6:3-5). *Do you suppose it is a mere accident that the Holy Spirit first mentions Antioch in the same chapter where He first mentions Alexandria?*
2. In Acts 11:19, Antioch is a shelter for persecuted saints.
3. The first major movement of the Holy Ghost among the Gentiles occurs in Antioch (Acts 11:20-21).
4. Paul and Barnabas taught the Bible in Antioch for a whole year (Acts 11:26).
5. The disciples were first called "Christians" at Antioch (Acts 11:26).
6. The church at Antioch sends relief to the poor saints at Jerusalem (Acts 11:27-30).
7. The first missionary journey is sent out from Antioch (Acts 13:1-3).
8. Antioch remains the home base or headquarters of the early church (Acts 14:19-26; 15:35).

9. The final decision of the Jerusalem council was first sent to Antioch (Acts 15:19-23, 30), because Antioch was the home base.

10. Antioch was the location of Paul setting Peter straight on his doctrine (Gal. 2:11).

Founded in 300 B.C. by Seleucus Nicator, Antioch was the third largest city of the Roman Empire. Located in Syria, about twenty miles inland from the Mediterranean on the Orontes River, Antioch had its sea port and more than its share of travelers and tradesmen. In His infinite wisdom, God picked the ideal location for a "home base". Antioch was far enough away from the culture and traditions of the Jews (Jerusalem and Judaea) and the Gentiles (Rome, Greece, Alexandria, etc) that new Christians could grow in the Lord. Meanwhile, its geographical location was ideal for taking God's word into all the world.

So, friend, you have a choice. You can get your Bible from Alexandria, or you can get it from Antioch. If you have a KJV, then your Bible is based on manuscripts from Antioch. If you have a new version, then you are one of many unfortunate victims of Satan's salesmen from Alexandria, Egypt.

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Sinaiticus and Vaticanus

When someone "corrects" the King James Bible with "more authoritative manuscripts" or "older manuscripts," or "the best authorities," they're usually making some reference to Sinaiticus or Vaticanus. These are two very corrupt fourth century uncials that are practically worshipped by modern scholars. These are the primary manuscripts that Westcott and Hort relied so heavily on when constructing their Greek text (1851-1871) on which the new versions are based.

Vaticanus (B) is the most worshipped. This manuscript was officially catalogued in the Vatican library in 1475, and is still property of the Vatican today. Sinaiticus (Aleph) was discovered in a trash can at St. Catherine's Monastery on Mt. Sinai by Count Tischendorf, a German scholar, in the year 1844. Both B and Aleph are Roman Catholic manuscripts. Remember that! You might also familiarize yourself with the following facts:

1. Both manuscripts contain the Apocrypha as part of the Old Testament.
2. Tischendorf, who had seen both manuscripts, believed they were written by the same man, possibly Eusebius of Caesarea (260-340 A.D.).
3. Vaticanus was available to the King James translators, but God gave them sense enough to ignore it.
4. Vaticanus omits Genesis 1:1-46:28, Psalm 106-138, Matthew 16:2-3, Rom. 16:24, I Timothy through Titus, the entire book of Revelation, and it conveniently ends the book of Hebrews at Hebrews 9:14. *If you're familiar with Hebrews 10, you know why.*

5. While adding *The Epistle of Barnabas* and *The Shepherd of Hermas* to the New Testament, Siniaticus omits John 5:4, 8:1-11, Matthew 16:2-3, Romans 16:24, Mark 16:9-20, Acts 8:37, and I John 5:7 (just to name a few).

6. It is believed that Siniaticus has been altered by as many as ten different men. Consequently, it is a very sloppy piece of work (which is probably the reason for it being in a trash can). Many transcript errors, such as missing words and repeated sentences are found throughout it.

7. The Dutch scholar, Erasmus (1469-1536), who produced the world's first printed Greek New Testament, rejected the readings of Vaticanus and Siniaticus.

8. Vaticanus and Siniaticus not only disagree with the Majority Text from which the KJV came, they also differ from each other. In the four Gospels alone, they differ over 3,000 times!

9. When someone says that B and Aleph are the oldest available manuscripts, they are lying. There are many Syriac and Latin translations from as far back as the SECOND CENTURY that agree with the King James readings. For instance, the Pashitta (145 A.D.), and the Old Syriac (400 A.D.) both contain strong support for the King James readings. There are about fifty extant copies of the Old Latin from about 157 A.D., which is over two hundred years before Jerome was conveniently chosen by Rome to "revise" it. Then Ulfilas produced a Gothic version for Europe in A.D. 330. The Armenian Bible, which agrees with the King James, has over 1,200 extant copies and was translated by Mesrob around the year 400. Sinaiticus and Vaticanus are clearly NOT the oldest and best manuscripts.

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Facts about Westcott and Hort

Brooke Foss Westcott (1825-1901) and Fenton John Anthony Hort (1828-1892) were the two English "scholars" who produced the corrupt Greek text of the modern versions. Their dominating influence on the revision committee of 1871-1881 accounts for most of the corruption that we have today in modern translations. The Bible believer should keep several points in mind when discussing these two men. The following information is well documented in *Final Authority*, by William Grady, and in Riplinger's *New Age Bible Versions*:

1. Together, the *Life and Letters of Brooke Foss Westcott* and the *Life and Letters of Fenton John Anthony Hort* run over 1,800 pages. A personal salvation testimony is not given once for either man, and the name "Jesus" is found only nine times!

2. Westcott was a firm believer in Mary worship, and Hort claimed that Mary worship had a lot in common with Jesus worship.

3. Hort believed in keeping Roman Catholic sacraments.

4. Hort believed in baptismal regeneration as taught in the Catholic church.

5. Hort rejected the infallibility of Scripture.
6. Hort took great interest in the works of Charles Darwin, while both he and Westcott rejected the literal account of Creation.
7. Westcott did not believe in the Second Coming of Christ, the Millennium, or a literal Heaven.
8. Both men rejected the doctrine of a literal Hell, and they supported prayers for the dead in purgatory.
9. Hort refused to believe in the Trinity.
10. Hort refused to believe in angels.
11. Westcott confessed that he was a communist by nature.
12. Hort confessed that he hated democracy in all its forms.
13. Westcott also did his share of beer drinking. In fact, only twelve years after the Revised Version was published, Westcott was a spokesman for a brewery.
14. While working on their Greek text (1851-1871), and while working on the Revision Committee for the Revised Version (1871-1881), Westcott and Hort were also keeping company with "*seducing spirits and doctrines of devils*" (I Tim. 4:1). Both men took great interest in occult practices and clubs. They started the *Hermes Club* in 1845, the *Ghostly Guild* in 1851, and Hort joined a secret club called *The Apostles* in the same year. They also started the *Eranus Club* in 1872. These were spiritualists groups which believed in such unscriptural practices as *communicating with the dead* (necromancy).
15. The Westcott and Hort Greek text was SECRETLY given to the Revision Committee.
16. The members of the Revision Committee of 1881 were sworn to a pledge of secrecy in regard to the new Greek text being used, and they met in silence for ten years.
17. The corrupt Greek text of Westcott and Hort was not released to the public until just five days before the debut of the Revised Version. This prevented Bible-believing scholars like Dean Burgon from reviewing it and exposing it for the piece of trash that it was.

QUESTION: Does this sound like an HONEST work of God or a DISHONEST work of the Devil?

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Translating the King James Bible

Unlike Westcott, Hort, and the R.V. Committee, King James went through great efforts to guard the 1611 translation from errors. Please note the following:

1. In 1604, King James announced that fifty-four Hebrew and Greek scholars had been appointed to translate a new Bible for English speaking people. The number was reduced to forty-seven by the time the work formally began in 1607.
2. Rather than working together all at one location, these men were divided into six separate groups, which worked at three separate locations. There were two at Westminster, two at Oxford, and two at Cambridge.
3. Each group was given a selected portion of Scripture to translate.
4. Each scholar made his own translation of a book, and then passed it on to be reviewed by each member of his group.
5. The whole group then went over the book together.
6. Once a group had completed a book of the Bible, they sent it to be reviewed by the other five groups.
7. All objectionable and questionable translating was marked and noted, and then it was returned to the original group for consideration.
8. A special committee was formed by selecting one leader from each group. This committee worked out all of the remaining differences and presented a finished copy for the printers in 1611.
9. This means that the King James Bible had to pass at least *FOURTEEN* examinations before going to press.
10. Throughout this entire process, any learned individuals of the land could be called upon for their judgment, and the churches were kept informed of the progress.

QUESTION: Does THIS sound like an HONEST work of God or a DISHONEST work of the Devil?

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Let's Compare Bibles

In this section, we have reprinted our *Let's Compare Bibles* tract. Here you will see several good examples of how modern Bible versions are attacking God's word. We have selected eight modern translations for evaluation. The translations evaluated are as follows:

NIV..... New International Version

NASB... New American Standard Bible

NRSV... New Revised Standard Version

REB..... Revised English Bible

LB..... Living Bible

NWT..... New World Translation

NAB New American Bible

NKJV.... New King James Version

Although we have limited this study to eight new translations, you will find many of these attacks manifested in ANY new translation. You will find that some of the most important doctrines of the Bible are being attacked in the new versions. Whether you have a Living Bible, a New Century Version, a Revised Standard Version, or any of the other perversions of Scripture, you are going to see the Devil hard at work on the revision committees of the new translations. The King James reading will appear first, followed by a brief comment, and then the perverted readings of the modern perversions.

Psalm 12:6-7

*The words of the LORD are pure **words**: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. **Thou shalt keep them**, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever.*

The above promise from the King James Bible tells us that God intends to preserve His **WORDS** forever. Notice how the new versions destroy this promise by making you think the context is God's PEOPLE rather than His WORDS:

NIV..... you will keep us safe

NASB... Thou wilt preserve him

NRSV... You, O Lord, will protect us

REB..... you are our protector

LB..... you will forever preserve your own

NAB..... You, O Lord, will keep us

Isaiah 7:14

*Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a **virgin** shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.*

Notice how some new versions attack the Virgin Birth of Christ by robbing Mary of her virginity. As anyone well knows, a *young woman* or a *maiden* is NOT necessarily a virgin:

NRSV... young woman

REB..... young woman

NWT..... maiden

Luke 2:33

*And **Joseph** and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him.*

Here the new versions attack the Virgin Birth by telling us that Joseph was Christ's father:

NIV..... The child's father

NASB... His father

NRSV... the child's father

REB..... The child's father

NWT..... its father

NAB..... the child's father

I Timothy 3:16

*And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: **God was manifest in the flesh**, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.*

Notice how the King James is very clear in telling us WHO was manifest in the flesh: **GOD was manifest in the flesh**. Now watch the new perversions throw God clear out of the verse:

NIV..... He appeared in a body

NASB... He who was revealed in the flesh

NRSV... He was revealed in flesh

REB..... He was manifested in the flesh

LB..... who came to earth as a man

NWT..... He was made manifest in the flesh

NAB..... He was manifested in the flesh

Micah 5:2

*But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, **from everlasting**.*

This is a prophecy of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the verse tells us that He had no beginning. As the Second Member of the Trinity, He is ETERNAL, or from everlasting, but not in most modern translations:

NIV..... from ancient times

NRSV... from ancient days

REB..... in ancient times

NWT.... from the days of time indefinite

NAB..... from ancient times (vs. 1)

Isaiah 14:12

*How art thou fallen from heaven, O **Lucifer**, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!*

Revelation 22:16 tells us that Jesus Christ is the "*Morning Star*". The King James Bible never gives this title to anyone else. However, in some new versions, Jesus Christ and Satan are the same, because some versions have taken the liberty to call Satan the "*morning star*" in Isaiah 14:12. Although some versions do not go so far as to call Satan the "morning star," they still throw out the name "Lucifer".

NIV..... morning star

NASB... star of the morning

NRSV... Day Star

REB..... Bright morning star

NWT..... you shining one

NAB..... morning star

Daniel 3:25

*He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like **the Son of God**.*

This is an excellent Old Testament verse which shows that Jesus Christ existed long before He was born in Bethlehem. Naturally, the new versions will pervert it with pagan foolishness:

NIV..... a son of the gods

NASB... a son of the gods

NRSV... a god

REB..... a god

LB..... a god

NWT.... a son of the gods

NAB..... a son of God (vs. 92)

Colossians 1:14

*In whom we have **redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins**:*

Satan hates the Atoning Blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, so we shouldn't be surprised to find the blood missing in modern translations:

NIV..... redemption, the forgiveness of sins

NASB... redemption, the forgiveness of sins

NRSV... redemption, the forgiveness of sins

REB..... our release is secured and our sins are forgiven

NWT.... we have our release by ransom, the forgiveness of sins

NAB..... redemption, the forgiveness of our sins

Romans 14:10-12

*But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the **judgment seat of Christ**. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.*

If you'll read the above verses carefully, you will notice how it magnifies Jesus Christ. According to verse 10, we will stand before the Judgment Seat of **CHRIST**, and verse 12 says that when we do we will give account to GOD. When we stand before Jesus Christ we will be standing before God--an excellent text on the Deity of Christ. Now watch as the new versions throw Jesus Christ clear out of the passage by replacing the word "Christ" in verse 10 with "God:"

NIV..... God's judgment seat

NASB... Judgment seat of God

NRSV... judgment seat of God

REB..... God's tribunal

LB..... Judgment Seat of God

NWT..... judgment seat of God

NAB..... judgment seat of God

Acts 8:37

And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

This verse is very important because it places a definite condition upon water baptism: *one must first BELIEVE ON CHRIST*. Many modern versions throw the entire verse out of the Bible:

NIV..... entire verse missing

NRSV... entire verse missing

REB..... entire verse missing

NWT..... entire verse missing

NAB..... omits entire verse, but re-numbers the verses so you won't miss it

II Corinthians 2:17

*For we are not as many, which **corrupt** the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ.*

You can imagine how this verse must be a thorn in the flesh to the modern translators who are busy CORRUPTING the word of God day and night. So, do they repent of their sins and get right with God? Of course not:

NIV..... peddle

NASB... peddling

NRSV... peddlers

REB..... adulterating the word of God for profit

LB..... hucksters

NWT..... peddlers

NAB..... trade on the word of God

NKJV.... peddling

II Timothy 2:15

***Study** to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, **rightly dividing** the word of truth.*

This is the one command in the New Testament to "*study*" and "*rightly divide*" God's word, and the Devil does NOT appreciate it:

NIV..... Do your best...correctly handles

NASB... Be diligent...handling accurately

NRSV... Do your best...rightly explaining

REB..... Try hard...keep strictly to the true gospel

LB..... Work hard...Know what his word says and means

NWT..... Do your utmost...handling the word of truth aright

NAB..... Try hard...following a straight course inpreaching the truth

NKJV.... Be diligent...rightly dividing

I Timothy 6:20

*O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of **science** falsely so called:*

Many lies are being propagated today in the name of "science" (evolution for example), but I Timothy 6:20 has been warning us about it all along - *except in the new perversions:*

NIV..... knowledge

NASB... knowledge

NRSV... knowledge

REB..... knowledge

LB..... knowledge

NWT..... knowledge

NAB..... knowledge

NKJV.... knowledge



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The New King James Version

We will now give some special attention to one of the deadliest translations on the market--the *New King James Version*, first published in 1979. It is a deadly version because its editors have succeeded in deceiving the body of Christ on two main points: (1) That it's a King James Bible (which is a lie), and (2) that it's based on the Textus Receptus (which is only a partial truth). The following information should be helpful when dealing with Christians who have been swindled by the Laodicean lovers of filthy lucre:

1. The text of the NKJV is copyrighted by Thomas Nelson Publishers, while there is no copyright today on the text of the KJV. If your KJV has maps or notes, then it may have a copyright, but the text itself does not.
2. There's nothing "new" about the NKJV logo. It is a "666" symbol of the *pagan* trinity which was used in the ancient Egyptian mysteries. It was also used by satanist Aleister Crowley around the turn of this century. The symbol can be seen on the New King James Bible, on certain rock albums (like Led Zeppelin's), or you can see it on the cover of such New Age books as *The Aquarian Conspiracy*. (See Riplinger's tract on the NKJV.)

3. It is estimated that the NKJV makes over 100,000 translation changes, which comes to *over eighty changes per page and about three changes per verse!* A great number of these changes bring the NKJV in line with the readings of such Alexandrian perversions as the NIV and the RSV. Where changes are not made in the text, subtle footnotes often give credence to the Westcott and Hort Greek Text.
4. While passing off as being true to the Textus Receptus, the NKJV IGNORES the Receptus over 1,200 times.
5. In the NKJV, there are 22 omissions of "hell", 23 omissions of "blood", 44 omissions of "repent", 50 omissions of "heaven", 51 omissions of "God", and 66 omissions of "Lord". The terms "devils", "damnation", "JEHOVAH", and "new testament" are completely omitted.
6. The NKJV demotes the Lord Jesus Christ. In John 1:3, the KJV says that all things were made "by" Jesus Christ, but in the NKJV, all things were just made "through" Him. The word "Servant" replaces "Son" in Acts 3:13 and 3:26. "Servant" replaces "child" in Acts 4:27 and 4:30. The word "Jesus" is omitted from Mark 2:15, Hebrews 4:8, and Acts 7:45.
7. The NKJV confuses people about salvation. In Hebrews 10:14 it replaces "are sanctified" with "are being sanctified", and it replaces "are saved" with "are being saved" in I Corinthians 1:18 and II Corinthians 2:15. The words "may believe" have been replaced with "may continue to believe" in I John 5:13. The old straight and "narrow" way of Matthew 7:14 has become the "difficult" way in the NKJV.
8. In II Corinthians 10:5 the KJV reads "casting down imaginations", but the NKJV reads "casting down arguments". The word "thought", which occurs later in the verse, matches "imaginations", not "arguments". This change weakens the verse.
9. The KJV tells us to reject a "heretick" after the second admonition in Titus 3:10. The NKJV tells us to reject a "divisive man". *How nice! Now the Alexandrians and Ecumenicals have justification for rejecting anyone they wish to label as "divisive men".*
10. According to the NKJV, no one would stoop so low as to "corrupt" God's word. No, they just "peddle" it (II Cor. 2:17). The reading matches the Alexandrian versions.
11. Since the NKJV has "changed the truth of God into a lie", it has also changed Romans 1:25 to read "exchanged the truth of God for the lie". This reading matches the readings of the new perversions, so *how say ye it's a King James Bible?*
12. The NKJV gives us no command to "study" God's word in II Timothy 2:15.
13. The word "science" is replaced with "knowledge" in I Timothy 6:20, although "science" has occurred in every edition of the KJV since 1611! *How say ye it's a King James Bible?*
14. The Jews "require" a sign, according to I Corinthians 1:22 (and according to Jesus Christ - John 4:48), but the NKJV says they only "request" a sign. *They didn't "request" one when signs*

first appeared in Exodus 4, and there are numerous places throughout the Bible where God gives Israel signs when they haven't requested anything (Exo. 4, Exo. 31:13, Num. 26:10, I Sam. 2:34, Isa. 7:10-14, Luke 2:12, etc). They "require" a sign, because signs are a part of their national heritage.

15. The King James reading in II Corinthians 5:17 says that if any man is in Christ he is a new "creature", which matches the words of Christ in Mark 16:15. The cross reference is destroyed in the NKJV, which uses the word "creation."

16. As a final note, we'd like to point out how the NKJV is very inconsistent in it's attempt to update the language of the KJV. The preface to the NKJV states that previous "revisions" of the KJV have "sought to keep abreast of changes in English speech", and also that they too are taking a "further step toward this objective". However, when taking a closer look at the language of the NKJV, we find that oftentimes they are stepping BACKWARDS! Please note a few examples of how well the NKJV has "kept abreast of the changes in the English language":

SCRIPTURE	KJV	NKJV
Ezra 31:4	little rivers	rivulets
Psalms 43:1	Judge	Vindicate
Psalms 139:43	thoughts	anxieties
Isaiah 28:1	fat	verdant
Amos 5:21	smell	savor
Matthew 26:7	box	flask
Luke 8:31	the deep	the abyss
John 10:41	did	performed
Luke 19:11-27	pounds	minas
John 19:9	judgement hall	Praetorium
Acts 1:8	bowels	entrails
Acts 18:12	deputy	proconsul

Acts 21:38	uproar	insurrection
Acts 27:30	boat	skiff
Hebrews 12:8	bastard	illegitimate

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The New Scofield Reference Bible

Another counterfeit "KJV" is the New Scofield Reference Bible (NSRB). "King James Version" is clearly printed on the cover, but since when has it been safe to judge a book by its cover? Please note the following:

1. Dr. C.I. Scofield had been dead many years when the NSRB was published in 1967. He would have never approved of having his name on a "bible" that alters the text of the KJV. The 1909 and 1917 editions of the Scofield Reference Bible do NOT change the text. Therefore the NSRB of 1967 is NOT a Scofield Bible and it is NOT a KJV.

2. Dr. Scofield would have never referred to baptism as a "sacrament," but the NSRB takes the liberty to do so in an Acts 8 footnote.

3. The NSRB changes the KJV with "better readings" in over 6,500 places.

4. In the introduction to the NSRB, 1967 edition, E. Schuyler English tries to justify changing the KJV *text* on the basis that Dr. Scofield saw the need to update his reference Bible after only eight years. Yes, Dr. Scofield did update his Bible after only eight years, but *HE NEVER CHANGED THE TEXT!*, and he never granted anyone else permission to do so. Only the NOTES were revised! (The Judgment Seat of Christ is going to be *very interesting* to say the least!)

5. In many places the NSRB agrees with the readings of the new translations, rather than the KJV, so it cannot possibly be a KJV. For example, "a son of the gods" appears in Daniel 3:25, rather than "the Son of God" (KJV). In Genesis 1:28, Adam is told to "fill" the earth, instead of "replenish" it, which isn't the same at all. A great reference to television and magazines is destroyed when the NSRB replaces "pictures" with "stone idols" in Numbers 33:52. Then, of course, the NSRB lines up right behind the ASV in places like I Timothy 6:20, Acts 4:27, and Romans 1:25.

6. Dr. William Grady addresses the NSRB in his book, *Final Authority*. His research includes the following on page 316: "*A random survey of the NSRB margins in Philippians alone revealed a total of 29 changes from the King James Bible. Of these, twenty-one (72%) were traced to either the RSV or the NASV. The skeptic can check it out for himself: Philippians 1:7, 8, 23, 27; 2:1, 15, 25, 27, 28; 3:1, 8, 17, 19, 20, 21; 4:3, 6, 14, 15, 21, and 22.*" The "*New Scofield Reference*

Bible" in the "*King James Version*" is NOT new, is NOT a *Scofield Bible*, and it is certainly NOT a *King James Version*.

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The Various Editions of the 1611 A.V.

If someone decides to produce a "new Bible version", then they must also convince Christians that there is a NEED and a justifiable CAUSE for the new version. One of the deceitful excuses being used today for producing new versions is that *the King James Bible has been revised several times since 1611, and that a new revision is needed once again*. While spreading this piece of deceitful misinformation, the KJV critics hold their breath, hoping that no one will be intelligent enough to ask for specific details about these "revisions". The many revisions that have occurred since 1881 bear NO RESEMBLANCE to the various EDITIONS of the KJV prior to 1881. The modern revisors are just trying to justify their sins!

There were only FOUR actual EDITIONS of the King James Bible produced after 1611: 1629, 1638, 1762, and 1769. These were not translations (like the new versions SINCE 1881), and they really weren't even "revisions".

The 1629 edition was simply an effort to correct *printing errors*, and two of the original King James translators assisted in the work.

The 1638 edition of the KJV also dealt with printing errors, especially words and clauses overlooked by the printers. About 72% of the textual corrections in the KJV were done by 1638, only 27 years after the first printing.

Please bear in mind the fact that printing was a very laborious task prior to 1800. Publishing a flawless work was almost impossible. Even today, with computers and advanced word processors, printing errors are still frequently made. Imagine what it was like in the 1600's!

Then, in 1762 and 1769, two final editions of the KJV were published. Both of these involved *spelling changes*, which became necessary as the English language became more stabilized and spelling rules were established.

There were no new *translations*, and there were really no new *revisions* published in 1629, 1638, 1762, or 1769. These were simply EDITIONS of the 1611 KJV, which corrected printing errors and spelling. Those who try to equate these editions with the modern translations are just being deceitful or stupid--*or both*. The many other so-called "revisions" of the KJV that occurred in 1613, 1616, 1617, and 1743 are nothing more than running changes and touch-up work at the printers. The REAL revisions and translations do not start appearing until 1881 (RV) and 1901 (ASV). So if some punk walks up with a smirky grin on his face and asks you, "So which King James Bible do you have, the 1611, the 1629, the 1638, the 1762, or the 1769?", you can simply state that you have a *1769 edition of the King James 1611 Authorized Version*.

[Dr. David F. Reagan has an excellent pamphlet available on this subject.](#) It can be ordered from: *Trinity Baptist Temple Bookstore, 5709 N. Broadway, Knoxville, TN, 37918. Telephone: 615-688-0780.*

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Why the KJV Translators Did Not Accept the Apocrypha as Scripture

Another favorite lie of the critics is that the original KJV of 1611 included the Apocrypha, which no true Christian today accepts as Scripture. The Apocrypha is a collection of several pagan writings which the Catholic church accepts as inspired Scripture. In fact, the Council of Trent (1546) pronounced a CURSE upon anyone who denied that these books were inspired. The King James translators did NOT consider the books to be inspired Scripture, nor did they include them in the canon as such. They merely placed the Apocryphal books BETWEEN the Old and New testament as a historical document, not as Scripture. Their reasons for not accepting the Apocrypha as Scripture are listed on page 185-186 of the book *Translators Revived*, by Alexander McClure. The seven reasons are basically as follows:

1. Not one of them is in the Hebrew language like the rest of the Old Testament books.
2. Not one of the writers lays any claim to inspiration.
3. These books were never acknowledged as sacred Scriptures by the Jewish church, and therefore were never sanctioned by our Lord.
4. They were not allowed a place among the sacred books, during the first four centuries of the Christian church.
5. They contain fabulous statements, and statements which contradict not only the canonical Scriptures, but themselves. For example, in the Books of Maccabees alone, Antiochus Epiphanes dies three times in three places!
6. It inculcates doctrines at variance with the Bible, such as prayers for the dead and sinless perfection.
7. It teaches immoral practices, such as lying, suicide, assassination and magical incantation.

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"Errors" in the King James Bible

Critics of the KJV have a nasty habit of pointing out what they believe to be errors, contradictions, and mistranslations in the Authorized Version. The sad fact is that they usually

point these things out to young men and women in Christian colleges who do not know any better. Many young Christians, including young preachers, are having their faith in God's word destroyed by the very people they look to for spiritual guidance!

These so-called "errors" that are presented by such infidels have been explained and written about so many times that it's a shame to even have to mention it again. There isn't enough space in a booklet of this size to embark upon a lengthy rebuttle of such claims. Besides, it has already been done quite well by others. Nevertheless, for the sake of showing the reader the nature of the so-called "errors" in the AV, we will take the time to briefly deal with just a few:

1. According to the critics, the word "Easter" in Acts 12:4 is a mistranslation, because the Greek word is "pascha," and it is translated "passover" twenty-eight times in the New Testament, and it should be translated likewise in Acts 12:4.

This is what happens when a man is so hung up on "the Greek" that he can't read plain English. It should NOT be translated "passover" because the Passover had already passed. The "*days of unleavened bread*" had already begun (vs. 3), which means the Passover was over (Num. 28:16-18; Exo. 12:13-18). The Passover was always the fourteenth day of the first month, while the days of unleavened bread ran from the fifteenth through the twenty-first. Herod could not have been waiting for the Passover. Besides, why would a Gentile king like Herod be concerned about a Jewish feast day? "Easter" is from the pagan "Ishtar", the goddess that the pagans worshipped--Rome included. Herod wanted to wait until his pagan holiday was over before bringing Peter out to the people.

2. I John 5:7 is also the subject of much debate. It is argued that the verse lacks manuscript evidence and does not belong in the Bible. Being one of the greatest verses in the Bible on the Trinity, we should be suspicious of any oppositions to it.

The verse should NOT be omitted from the Bible. It is found in Greek manuscript 61, which probably forced Erasmus to include it in his third edition Greek text of 1522.

I John 5:7 is also found in Codex Ravianus, and in the margins of 88 and 629. It is also found in Old Latin manuscripts *r* and *Speculum*. It was quoted by Cyprian around A.D. 250, and two Spanish Bishops quoted it in the fourth century (Priscillkian and Idacius Clarus). Several African writers quote it in the fifth century, and Cassiodorus quotes it in the sixth century in Italy.

The fact that Siniaticus and Vaticanus do not include the verse means nothing *to a true Bible believer*. *After all, Vaticanus omits the entire book of Revelation, while keeping the Apocrypha!*

3. Many argue that the KJV is in error with it's use of the word "devils" instead of "demons". Again, this is due to an over emphasis on "the Greek" as well as a lack of faith in God's ability to preserve His words in English. While protesting that "daimon" should be translated "demon", many have overlooked a great truth which the Holy Spirit has preserved in the King's English. There is one true "Son of God", but many "sons of God". There is one true "Church", the Bride of Christ, but many local "churches". Likewise, there is one "Devil", but many "devils" under his control.

The word "demon" itself does not necessarily imply an *evil* spirit. Even Webster's 1828 dictionary states that "the ancients believed that there were good and evil demons...", and New Agers of today believe likewise. Therefore, God led the KJV translators to translate "devils" instead of "demons" because every "daimon" in the Bible IS an evil spirit. The word "devil" makes that clear. Every "devil" in the Bible is under the authority of their father "the Devil".

4. Then we have "contradictions" like Exodus 24:10 and John 1:18. Exodus says the Israelites SAW God, while Jesus said in John that "no man hath seen God at any time". Contradiction, right? No, it's only a matter of rightly dividing the word of truth (which you may not be practicing if II Tim. 2:15 has been altered in your "bible"). God is a Trinity, just like you and I. We're a body, a soul, and a spirit (I Ths. 5:23). The Israelites saw a physical *manifestation* of God, but not the SOUL of God, just as no one has ever seen your soul.

5. Numbers 25:9 says that 24,000 people died in a plague, but I Corinthians 10:8 says that only 23,000 died. Read I Corinthians 10:8 again and notice that 23,000 fell "in one day". The 24,000 died altogether in a few days.

You see, these are the kind of "errors" in the King James Bible. These are the reasons given for you to throw away your Bible and buy a new one. Don't fall for it. I have learned to always give God the benefit of a doubt, and to count the critics guilty until proven innocent. So far I've been right. Anytime I see an "error" in the KJV I just assume that I'm not learned enough in the Scriptures to explain it, but that it is NOT an error. I just pray about it and trust God. I *NEVER* correct the Book that God has honored for so long. *Thank God, I'm not that stupid.*

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Fifty Stumbling Stones of the Laodicean Translations

In this final section, I'd like to point out one of the best things about the new versions. What might that be? It is the fact that we know where they're going to alter God's word before they do it! We know how to "check'em out" without having to waste our God-given time reading the whole translation. The following list includes fifty "check points" which anyone can use to expose a new translation. No translation will be guilty on all fifty counts, but any translation since 1881 will alter God's word enough to prove that the revisionists do not have God's best interest in heart. For emphasis, I'll present these items from Satan's standpoint, briefly illustrating his purpose for many of the changes:

1. Genesis 1:29. Omit the word "meat" since there is no real flesh in the verse, only plant life. This will destroy the cross reference to the "meat offering" of Leviticus 2, which is really a GRAIN offering with no flesh. The Bible has it's own built in dictionary, but let's not allow people to know it.

2. Genesis 3:5. Alter the word "gods" and the cross references to Psalm 82, I Corinthians 8:5, and II Corinthians 4:4 will be destroyed.

3. Genesis 22:1. The word "tempt" in the verse should be replaced with "try". Here's another case of the "built-in dictionary". James 1:2-3 explains the kind of tempting that this was, but let's hide it from as many Christians as possible.
4. Numbers 33:52. Someone might use the word "pictures" as a reference to television. Throw it out!
5. Isaiah 7:14. Attack the virgin birth by omitting the word "virgin". After all, the Hebrew word "almah" can mean a *virgin*, a *damsel*, or just a *young woman*. Laodicean Christians are too lazy to check Matthew 1:23 to see how Matthew translated it.
6. Daniel 3:25. There's Jesus Christ in the Old Testament! Can't have that! *Someone might get the idea that He's eternal*. Change "the Son of God" to "a son of the gods."
7. Micah 5:2. Another chance to attack the eternal existence of Christ. Throw out "everlasting".
8. Zechariah 9:9. We're not interested in anyone being SAVED, so omit the words "having salvation".
9. Matthew 1:25. Omit "firstborn" because it shows the reader that Mary had other children after Jesus and did NOT remain a perpetual virgin. They'll never think to check Psalm 69:8, Galatians 1:19, or John 7:5.
10. Matthew 5:22. Let's create a contradiction by omitting the words "without a cause". This will make Jesus contradict Paul in Ephesians 4:26.
11. Matthew 6:13. Omit the "kingdom", the "power", and the "glory".
12. Matthew 27:54. Change "the Son of God" to "a son of God".
13. Mark 1:1. This is the only Gospel which refers to Christ as the "Son of God" in the very first verse. Throw it out.
14. Mark 16:9-20. Either throw out the last twelve verses of Mark or raise doubt about them in the margins and footnotes. The less we read of a resurrected Christ the better.
15. Luke 1:34. Change Mary's words "I know not a man" to "I have no husband". This will allow for possible fornication between Mary and Joseph, which could make Joseph the father of Jesus.
16. Luke 2:33. Attack the virgin birth again by replacing "Joseph" with "father".
17. Luke 4:4. Omit "by every word of God". No one will think to check Deuteronomy 8:3.
18. Luke 23:42. Here's a sinner being saved by calling upon the name of the "Lord", which is in perfect tune with Romans 10:13. Replace the divine title "Lord" with the human name "Jesus".

19. Luke 24:51. Raise doubt about the ascension of Christ by omitting the words "carried up into heaven". Hopefully, no one will check Luke's later comments in Acts 1:1-2.
20. John 1:14. Omit the word "begotten", just like in John 1:18, 3:16, and 3:18.
21. Acts 1:3. Omit the word "infallible". Nothing is infallible.
22. Acts 4:27. Jesus wasn't God's "child". He was only His "servant".
23. Acts 8:37. Either omit the entire verse or raise doubt about it, because this verse states that scriptural water baptism is conditional upon BELIEF.
24. Acts 12:4. Change "Easter" to "passover". No one will ever read Exodus and Numbers to find the truth.
25. Acts 17:22. Change "superstitious" to "religious".
26. Romans 1:18. Let's change "hold the truth in unrighteousness" to "suppress the truth", which is a much weaker reading.
27. Romans 1:25. Let's say they "exchanged the truth of God for a lie" instead of "changed the truth of God into a lie".
28. Romans 1:29. Throw out "fornication".
29. Romans 10:17. Replace the word "God" with "Christ". This will teach that faith comes by rallying around the person of Jesus alone and not by feeding on every word of God (Luke 4:4).
30. Romans 14:10. Change the word "Christ" to "God". This will prevent anyone from realizing that Jesus Christ is God when they read verse twelve.
31. I Corinthians 1:22. Change "require" to "request", and destroy the great truth about signs being for Israel.
32. II Corinthians 2:17. Since we are guilty of corrupting the word of God, replace the word "corrupt" with "peddle".
33. II Corinthians 5:17. Replace the word "creature" with "creation", although Mark 16:15 says "creature".
34. Ephesians 1:7. Throw out the "blood".
35. Philippians 3:21. People don't have "vile" bodies. They just have "lowly" bodies.
36. Colossians 1:14. Throw out the "blood".

37. I Thessalonians 5:22. Omit the word "appearance" so Christians will not be very concerned about their testimony.
38. I Timothy 3:16. The verse says that "God was manifest in the flesh". Attack the Deity of Christ and the Incarnation by throwing "God" clear out of the verse.
39. I Timothy 6:10. Change "all evil" to "all kinds of evil". 40. I Timothy 6:20. Since many heresies are taught today in the name of "science", and this verse gives a strong warning against "science falsely so-called", change the word "science" to "knowledge".
41. II Timothy 2:15. This is the only command in the Bible to "study" the word of God. Omit the word "study".
42. James 5:16. Let's justify Roman Catholic confessionals by changing the word "faults" to "sins".
43. I Peter 5:11. Omit "glory" and "dominion".
44. I John 1:7. Omit the word "Christ".
45. I John 4:3. Omit the words "Christ is come in the flesh".
46. I John 5:7. There's the Trinity! Throw out the whole verse or insert marginal notes to raise doubt about it.
47. Revelation 1:5. Omit the word "blood".
48. Revelation 5:9. Omit the word "blood".
49. Revelation 11:15. Change the many "kingdoms" that Jesus Christ will receive to one singular "kingdom".
50. Revelation 11:17. Attack the Second Coming of Christ by omitting the words "art to come".

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Recommended Reading

Which Bible?, David Otis Fuller, Which Bible? Society, P.O. Box 7096, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49507.

An Understandable History of the Bible, Dr. Samuel C. Gipp, Bible Believer's Baptist Bookstore, 1252 E. Aurora Road, Macedonia, Ohio 44056.

The Answer Book, Gipp.

Final Authority, Dr. William P. Grady, Grady Publications, Inc., P.O. Box 506, Schererville, Indiana 46375.

The King James Version Defended, Dr. Edward F. Hills, The Christian Research Press, P.O. Box 2013, Des Moines, Iowa 50310.

Believing Bible Study, Hills.

Translators Revived, Alexander McClure, R. E. Publications, P.O. Box 66212, Mobile, Alabama 36606.

The Men Behind The King James Version, Gustavus Paine, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49516.

God Only Wrote One Bible, Jasper James Ray, Eye Opener Publishers, P.O. Box 7944, Eugene, Oregon 97401.

New Age Bible Versions, G. A. Riplinger, A.V. Publications, Box 388, Munroe Falls, Ohio 44262.

Which Bible Is God's Word?, Riplinger.

The Christian's Handbook of Manuscript Evidence, Dr. Peter S. Ruckman, Pensacola Bible Institute, P.O. Box 7135, Pensacola, FL 32504.

The Christian's Handbook of Biblical Scholarship, Ruckman.

Problem Texts, Ruckman.

The Bible Babel, Ruckman.

The following tracts and booklets are also available from Bible Baptist Church:

[The Bible Believer's Helpful Little Handbook](#)

Why Does God Allow People to Suffer?

Child Abuse: Something Every Parent Should Know

[How I Know the KJV is God's Word](#)

Let's Compare Bibles

Fables and Facts about the King James Bible

Seven Simple Things You Should Know About Salvation

The Second Coming of Jesus Christ

Signs of the Times

Why Should I Receive Jesus Christ as My Saviour?

The Bible vs. The Jehovah's Witnesses

How I Know I'm Going to Heaven

[Evolution: Fact or Fiction](#)

The Five Facts of Life

Sample packages are available upon request.

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